

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR.



*Forasle not against Flesh & Blood, but against principalities & powers.
Ephes: VI: XII.*

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Ephes: VI: XII.*

THE
DUTY of a Real Christian, *K*

BOTH IN
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Faith and Practice,

UPON
GOSPEL PRINCIPLES,

FOR
Promoting a *devout* and *holy* Life, in a new
and easy Method, adapted to all Capacities.

CONTAINING
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For MORNING and EVENING, and *several* Occasions.

*This is the victory that overcometh the world, even
our Faith. 1 John v. 4.
Faith without Works is dead. James ii. 20.*

Necessary for all Families.

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M D C C L X I I I.



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AN
EPISTLE
TO THE
Christian READER.

 YOU are here presented with an attempt to enrich the understanding with such essential truths, as are required to improve the *almost*, into the state of the *real christian*. It has long been a melancholy consideration, that many well meaning *christians* are found to be shamefully ignorant of the grand *principles* and necessary *duties* of that religion, by the *belief* and *practice* whereof they hope to be saved: an ignorance frequently owing to a defect in the means to make them inwardly feel the truth of the peculiar doctrines of *christianity*, and to acknowledge the necessity of their compliance with all the laws of CHRIST; to take them off from the dangerous delusion of meritorious works, which choak up the channels of grace, and to convince them, that there can be no forgiveness of sin, no reconciliation with the Father, nor salvation for mankind, but thro' the merits of JESUS CHRIST only.

Many

An Epistle to the Christian Reader.

Many have been the endeavours of the learned and devout, to supply this defect of education, by books and treatises, concerning the doctrine and worship, the fundamentals and modes of *christianity*. But how often have these failed by attempting to unveil what God has thought proper to keep secret; by strife and contention about words, modes and ceremonies, and by zeal without knowledge, launching deep into hidden mysteries, to gratify vain curiosity; and by placing too much dependance on self-righteousness, have made their followers, like the converts of the *Pharisees*, twofold more the children of the devil.

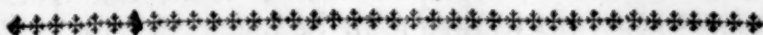
The treatise before you is composed with all possible care to avoid these blemishes in religion, and to draw the FAITH and PRACTICE of a *real christian* so strictly together, with a chain of *gospel principles*, that he may be always ready to exemplify good works in his life and conversation, and so grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God, and of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, that his *faith* may be found acceptable in the day of the Lord; and having thereby conquered this world, he may receive the crown of life promised to those, who shall be faithful unto death.

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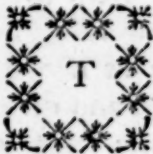


T H E

INTRODUCTION.



- I. *Of the End for which Man was created.*
 II. *Of true Religion.* III. *Of the Holy Scriptures.*

SECT. I.  THE ultimate end of our crea-

tion is a subject, that has employed the thoughts and pens of the most learned and the most virtuous. Even they, who had no more than the light of nature for their direction, in this great enquiry, could find that human nature was created for a happiness, not attainable in this life: none of those things pitched upon by the philosophers are able to satisfy the desires of the human soul.—Not riches; for these are uncertain, changeable and vain; and often involve their possessor in more trouble and danger, than poverty.—Not honour; for these are also vain and inconstant, depending upon the humour and breath of others.—Not bodily pleasures; for beasts enjoy the same, and there are few of them, but leave behind them a nauseous disolish.—Not even moral virtues, which is the highest pitch to which nature is capable of ascending by its own strength; for, these virtues consist in a perpetual conflict with our passions, which perpetually disturb our rest.—So that, whatever we fix upon here for the end of our creation,

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it cannot stand the test, it yields no satisfaction in this life; and therefore, we are to seek it by other means than the light of nature, and to be content to wait for it in a life to come.

As man was not made by himself; so it is likely that he was not made merely for himself. It was the Lord that made us, and not we ourselves: and as GOD *made all things for himself*, man, the most noble part of his works, must be included. GOD is our last end: he could not create us, but for himself. He expects that we should be wholly his, who made us what we are. We must live unavoidably under the empire of his goodness, or under the empire of his justice. He is a father to them, who give him honour; and a terrible GOD to such as do not regard their latter end. How vain, how inconsiderate, therefore, is it, to live as if we were sent into the world purely for pleasure and diversion?

Man was created *upright*, in the *image and likeness of GOD*. This ought to convince us, that the true design of our being placed in this world, is to serve GOD in *Spirit* and in *Truth*, and continually to pursue that happiness, which he has prepared for those that love him and keep his commandments.—This was the condition of our creation, that *we shall be to him a people*, and the *sheep of his pasture*: and this was the intention of our redemption, that being *delivered out of the hands of our spiritual enemies*, we might *serve him without fear, and walk before GOD in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life*.

Whatever is contrary, or foreign, or not conducive to this end, can turn to no true profit. Happiness is the end we are to promote, and all other creatures are given to serve our occasions in order to that end. He that rightly considers this, will look upon all worldly things with indifference, and desire them only in proportion, as they shall be found useful for the attainment of that end. Riches, or poverty,

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verty, health or sickness, honour or contempt, ought to be regarded by man in such measure only, as they more or less may contribute to the honour of God and our own eternal happiness. Whoever seeks, covets, loves, or uses any of the creatures, otherwise than thus, sets up a new end to himself, and forsakes that, which he was sent into the world to pursue.

They that attend to the true business of the people of God: they who bend all their cares, thoughts, endeavours, and the whole strain of their conversation this way: if the degree of their concern for the conveniencies of life, answer to that of their usefulness to their main point: and if their time be spent in the knowledge and love of God, and of his son JESUS CHRIST, our Lord; and they labour *to work out their salvation with fear and trembling*; such men walk with God: their feet shall not slip; their condition is blessed, and they cannot fail to attain that happiness, for which mankind were originally created. God might have chosen, whether he would have created man, or no; but he could not have created him for any other end, than to be happy.

The apostle attributes the attainment of an incorruptible crown to our keeping the goal constantly in view, making directly up to it, and running within those narrow limits, marked out by the master of the race. Yet there are but few, in comparison to the many, that are called to this state of salvation, who employ a little time in the service of God, and the concerns of their soul. How infinite are the numbers, that break their rest and rack their brains about the profits and pleasures; the conveniencies and vanities of this life? And how few are there, who make any manner of provision for the next? There are many who consume their days in eating and drinking; in chambering and wanton-

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ness; in sleep, sloth, pride and drefs, and divert themselves at the expence of innocence; but the way of the Lord they have not known: they run after a lie, the idol of a carnal mind: their pride, riches and pomp, pass away like a shadow, till they are *consumed in their own iniquity*. These are the men who are gone out of the way, who have spent their strength in the pursuit of vanity, who have lost their time, their labour, and every opportunity to retrieve either; whose danger is unavoidable; whose punishment will be insupportable, and whose calamity and grief inconsolable.

Let us form to ourselves a just idea of those inward terrors, which seize the greatest monarchs, conquerors and tyrants at their last hour: the gripes and stings of conscience; which tortured Alexander dying with poison: Julius Cæsar assassinated in the senate; or of Herod struck by an angel, and eaten up with worms, or any other wicked and worldly princes, brought to a true sense of their carnal life; should warn us to provide for our happiness, and to enter betimes into those thoughts, and that judgment of things, which operate so strongly, and with so much distraction upon a death-bed; awakened at a nearer prospect of GOD's dreadful tribunal. If we let the day of mercy pass away, and harden our hearts, we must yield to extreme justice, and shall *never enter into rest*.

Oh that men were wise, that they would understand this: that they would consider their latter end: for he is the only wise man, that is wise for his own soul. If happiness and heaven be our end, what can induce us to be so much in love with the earth and transitory joys? If GOD be our end, why do we so greedily seek the favour of men? If the salvation of an immortal soul be our end; why do we so eagerly labour for the things of this world?—Why do we spend our money for that which is not bread; and our labour

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labour for that, which satisfieth not? If we be heirs of a kingdom, and joint-heirs with CHRIST, why do we serve sin, and enslave ourselves to the creatures? If it be our birthright to feed at our Father's table, why do we squander away our patrimony, and reduce ourselves to the necessity of feeding on husks with swine?

The bewitchings of naughtiness may obscure the things that are honest, just and good, and we may plead, that the wanderings of concupiscence may undermine a simple mind. But the fatal power of this enchantment cannot excuse us. Where the folly is of a man's own creating, he who is seduced by it, shall not only lose his labour, but be punished for his loss. *This people, says Isaiah, is not wise, therefore, he that made them, will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour.*

These are awakening calls to a soul, that must give an account of its *stewardship*. Should God find a soul given up to a reprobate sense, or neglectful of its salvation, he has threatened *to cut the unfaithful servant asunder, and to appoint him his portion with hypocrites and unbelievers, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Let us, therefore, state the account with our own conscience; and repent, return, and redeem the time we have lost by trifling and wandering from the paths of virtue and happiness. Let us not only resolve to lead a new life; but do it immediately. Delays are always dangerous; and should the door of mercy be shut before we are prepared to go into it, we shall be undone and excluded for ever from the joys of heaven.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and merciful GOD, of whose only gift it cometh that thy faithful people do unto thee true and laudable service: grant, I beseech

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Thee, that I may so faithfully serve Thee in this life, that I fail not finally to attain thy heavenly promises, through the merits of JESUS CHRIST.
Amen.

SECT. II. *Without holiness no man can see the Lord.* They that would be happy, must first be holy : they must honour and serve the GOD of their salvation.

This is what is usually comprehended under the word *Religion*. They that serve the Lord must be pious and obedient. They must reverence him as their parent, and obey him as their master. *The son honoureth his father, and the servant his master: If I then be a Father, saith the Lord, where is mine honour; and if I be a master, where is my fear.*

The acts of *Religion* are many, and of different kinds. Some are internal; as, love and faith, devotion and prayer: others are external; as, worship, sacrifice and vows, and all those acts, by which we testify and declare the religious acts of the mind. St. James, in his definition of religion, includes all virtues and charitable offices: *Pure religion and undefiled before GOD and the Father, says he, is this; to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world.*

Every sect and opinion, even amongst the Infidels, have always sanctified the reverence and honour they paid to a divine Being by the name *Religion*: and every one has seemed to be confident, that his *Religion*, or worship of GOD, was the right. It is not a place here to enter into an examination of their particular claims. It is sufficient, and no more is required than, to shew that the *Happiness*, we are to seek for, is only attainable by the *Christian Religion*.

This religion is not a human invention, nor to be sought for in the dictates, writings and institutions of men. It is not a creature of the schools, nor the

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the child of enthusiasm. It is the gift of God, and is to be found only in his divine word. *Search the Scriptures*, says the blessed JESUS, *for, in them ye think ye have eternal life.* In them the necessities to salvation, which every one ought to know and believe, are laid plain and open to us all. As that, which is needful for the support and comfort of the body, is to be had in common, and at a reasonable price: so what is needful to conduct the soul in its way to heaven, and to preserve it to life eternal, our gracious and merciful GOD has not hid it in the dark, nor placed it afar off; but has made it so plain, that he who runneth may read his duty, and every honest and humble enquirer may be led into the way of all truth.

It is not what this doctor, or that society of men, be they ever so learned and religiously inclined, shall say; but what the glorious GOD has said, that we ought to believe and to obey. Many are very diligent, so as to travel over sea and land, to gain converts; and yet, neither understand what they believe, nor *what they say, nor whereof they affirm*; having deserted and slighted the Holy Scriptures, they can never find a sure footing in the traditions and doctrines of men. Some place it in the understanding, in orthodox opinions and notions; and all the account they can give of their religion is, that they are of this or the other persuasion. Others place it in the outward man, in a constant course of external duties, and a model of performances: if they live peaceably with their neighbours, are temperate in their diet, observe the returns of worship, frequenting the church and the closet, and sometimes relieve the poor, they imagine that they have sufficiently acquitted themselves. Again, others place all religion in the affections, in rapturous hearts and extatic devotions: all that such aim at is, to pray with passion, and to think of heaven with pleasure; and to be af-

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fects with those luscious and melting expressions, wherewith they court their Saviour, till they persuade themselves, that they are mightily in love with him, and from thence assume an ill-grounded assurance of their salvation. Thus they frequently mistake the appearance of piety, and the means of obtaining it, or the form of godliness and particular exercises of it, for the whole of religion. But, they who tread perpetually on that holy ground of divine revelation, shall arrive safely at the mansions of bliss. True religion is an union of the soul with GOD, a real participation of the divine nature, the very image of GOD, drawn upon the soul, or according to the Apostle, *it is Christ formed within us.* In a word, *it is a divine life.* For, *This is life eternal to know thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom thou hast sent. There is no other name under heaven given to men, in whom and through whom we may receive salvation, but only the name of the same JESUS CHRIST. Therefore whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of CHRIST hath not GOD: but he that abideth in the doctrine of CHRIST hath both the Father and the Son; and has been taught by him, as the truth is in JESUS.*

Hence we discover the peculiar privilege of *Christians.* The word of GOD is to them a fountain of truth; a light to their eyes; and a guide to their feet: a rule so sufficient, that it is infallible, it cannot err; so plain and intelligible, that we cannot fail understanding it, in all points needful for us, if the fault be not our own. This is the testimony of the LORD, which giveth understanding and wisdom unto the simple and illiterate. For, though it does not make them scholars, nor free them from all manner of errors, it will secure them from sinning to their ruin, and make them wise to the saving of their souls.

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I admit that there are many places in the scriptures hard to be understood. But, it is the opinion of the best expositors, that our salvation does not depend upon the understanding of such hard sentences; and that should we never understand them, we might not be culpable on that account in the sight of GOD. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; let them be learned or unlearned; and he will shew them his covenant.*

The difficulty is to know, whether we are in the truth. Hear what St. John saith, *If any man does his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD: he shall know it by its restraining the pride of man, and glorifying the grace of GOD, in our salvation by JESUS CHRIST: by its tendency to suppress sin and wickedness, and to promote a holy and virtuous life: by its drawing the heart away from earthly and temporal things, to things heavenly and eternal: by its carrying us out of forms and carnal rites, to worship GOD in spirit and in truth: and by its efficacy to settle the conscience in such a solid peace, that casteth out all fear, and fills the soul with divine love and joy in the Holy Ghost.* Thus the believer may be truly said *to have the witness in himself*: for he feels the truth by the powerful influence, which it hath in himself, to transform him into a suitableness to what he believes.

THE PRAYER.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things, graft in my heart the love of thy name; increase in me true religion, nourish me with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep me in the same, through JESUS CHRIST, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

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SECT. III. The *Holy Scriptures* are those divine writings, commonly known by the name of *The word of GOD*, delivered to mankind by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, as the LORD commanded them, and by JESUS CHRIST and his disciples, who faithfully preached and published to all the world the last and full will of GOD the Father, which CHRIST made known unto them.

This revelation by JESUS CHRIST fulfilled that, which had been delivered by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, saying none other things, than they said should come to pass; and denouncing a woe against as many as should add to, or take away from it.

The Books wrote by *Moses* and the *Prophets* are *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, *Deuteronomy*, *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*, two books of *Samuel*, two books of *Kings*, two books of *Chronicles*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Esther*, *Job*, *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Song of Solomon*, *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Lamentations*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Amos*, *Obadiah*, *Jonah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, *Halakkuk*, *Zephaniah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, *Malachi*; which are all that the church of CHRIST receives of the Old Testament, for *canonical*, wrote by divine inspiration. Though there are other books commonly added to the BIBLE, under the names of *Esdras*, *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Hester*, *Wisdom*, *Ecclesiasticus*, *Baruch*, *Song of the Three Children*, *Susanna*, *Bell and the Dragon*, *Prayer of Manasses*, and the *Maccabees*, which St. *Hierome* saith are read for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet are not to be applied for the establishment of any doctrine.

The Books of the *New Testament* wrote by the *Apostles* and *Evangelists* are, the Gospels by St. *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*; the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, the epistles of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, two to the *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, two to the *Thessalonians*, two to *Timothy*, to *Titus*,
Philemon,

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Philemon, and the *Hebrews*: of *St. James*; two of *St. Peter*; three of *St. John*; the epistle of *St. Jude*, and the *Revelation* of *John* the divine.

They all were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope: to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path: and they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of GOD may be made perfect. Therefore it is the received doctrine of the most sound believers, “ That
“ the Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary
“ to salvation: and that whatsoever is not read
“ therein, and may not be proved thereby, is not
“ to be required of any man, that it should be be-
“ lieved as an article of the faith, or be thought re-
“ quisite or necessary to salvation.”

Ignorance of these sacred books is the mother of error, not of sound doctrine and devotion. *Ye do err*, says CHRIST himself, *not knowing the scripture, nor the power of GOD.* The gospel is *hid only to them that are lost.* Therefore we are exhorted to give attention to reading, to search the scriptures; to delight and meditate in them day and night, and to take care that, when we have read and searched them, they may dwell richly in us in all knowledge and wisdom. In which the following principles may serve to illustrate such passages, as require more study, than can be expected amongst the generality of readers.

THE PRAYER.

BLESSED LORD, who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that I may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience

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and comfort of thy holy word, I may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given me and all the world in our Saviour JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*



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BOOK



BOOK THE FIRST.
O F
GOD THE FATHER.



CHAPTER I.

Of the BEING and NATURE of GOD.

HE first of all the commandments is,
Hear, O Israel! the Lord our GOD is
T ONE Lord. In this scripture we find
the sum and substance of vital and
practical religion. It contains the
true knowledge of GOD: and the first
and chief point in our religious enquiries is to dis-
cover what GOD is. We must believe there is a
GOD, and know his nature and personality, before
we can serve and love him. We cannot love what
we know nothing of.

In

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In this enquiry, we are not at liberty to think what we please about his existence, nature, and personality. We are under an obligation to attend to what GOD has revealed about them. And it was necessary he should do this ; because there is no religion without a GOD, and no true religion without the true GOD ; who being the proper object of our worship, we must know him, before we can learn what religious worship we are to perform.

Our belief in this article is not grounded on the light of nature, or upon human learning ; but upon the holy scripture : and we ought to abide by what is revealed to us. There can be no salvation without a belief in GOD. He that cometh to GOD must believe that he is : consequently he cannot be saved, except he believes in the true GOD.

No man knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any one the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him : therefore, no man, be he ever so wise and learned, can arrive at the knowledge of GOD the *Father*, but by the revelation of his *Son*. According to that of the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, *The world by wisdom knew not GOD*, or were not able to discover the true GOD. We cannot by searching find out GOD : we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection by the strength of reason and light of nature. Such knowledge is as high as heaven, deeper than hell, longer than the earth, broader than the sea, or intirely beyond the reach of human faculties.

The heathen philosophers could find out by their study, that there must be a supreme Being, which did observe all our actions, which did govern all the occurrences of life, and was the author of all the good, and of all the punishments, or evil, which did happen unto them. Upon this principle, they taught the people to love and to fear that Being, and to invoke and to worship him with adoration
and

Of the Being and Nature of God. 15

and sacrifices, to turn away his wrath, and to express their thanks and gratitude for the blessings received. All this was attainable without revelation; *for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.* But, for want of that knowledge, communicated to mankind by the holy scripture, they could not glorify him as GOD: *they became vain in their imaginations; so vain as to imagine a plurality of Gods, and that they did dwell in certain beasts, in brutes, in plants, and in images made of stone, wood, metal, or the like, multiplying their number, till they were almost as numerous as their worshippers.*

Such is the foolishness of the human heart, when it is hardened with pride and self-sufficiency. Thus the philosophers, *professing themselves to be wise, became fools, and fell into gross idolatry along with the ignorant vulgar: for, they changed the glory of the incorruptible GOD into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and to creeping things.* So great is the danger of trusting to human learning, and to the light of nature, in the search of what can be known to perfection by revelation only.

Let us see what the scripture teacheth. In the Old Testament we are instructed, that there is but *one* GOD, who made the heavens and the world, and all that is therein; who has power to punish and to shew mercy; whom alone we are to serve, worship and adore in the beauty of holiness, and who in power and glory shall judge the people righteously. But, this belief was not perfect. This was not knowing GOD to perfection. He was not perfectly known till the *Son of GOD* revealed him under the amiable character of a FATHER, and that, in his divine essence, there are *three distinct persons*: that these three distinct persons are but *ONE GOD*, eternal,

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nal, infinite, and most perfect in him: and that he has established with mankind a covenant of grace; and promised eternal happiness to all believers.

Nevertheless, though we are to acquiesce in the account of the essence and nature of GOD given in his sacred word, it is necessary for the conviction of others, who may not readily submit to scriptural proof only, to be armed with arguments to give a reason of our belief, that there is a GOD.

By the *light of nature* it is agreed, that there has been a succession of creatures for many ages. But those creatures could not make themselves: and they being made by some other being, their maker must be uncreate; and therefore, he, *of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things; in whom we live, move and have our being,* is the *first cause* of all things, necessarily existing, and not depending on the will of another, and consequently he is our GOD.

From the *works* of GOD his being is also proved. The cause is known by its effects. Survey the universe. The uses and harmony, the beauty and subordination of the parts, direct us to the divine Author. Without the light of the sun, the earth would be no better than a cave or a dungeon, nor be able to yield her increase either of plants, trees, or creatures. The clouds give moisture and make the land fruitful; and the air fans and refreshes the earth, and is necessary for the growth of all things, and for the health and life of all living creatures. Yet, these parts do not act at our command: they are subject to the order and direction of the GOD, who *in wisdom hath made them all*: who commands the sun, and it casteth forth its heat and light; and the clouds to *pour down rain according to the vapour thereof*; and the winds to *warm and to cool, to refresh and to freeze*, at his own pleasure.

No creature can produce the least insect, otherwise than by the fixed laws of nature: none but God can give life. But he, who is able to give sensitive motion and action to a creature, must have that power in himself; and consequently is God.

The natural instinct of living creatures, every one acting according to its kind, and some of the smallest producing what no human art can imitate, plainly proves the being of God. It is this God who prompts the bird to make her nest; the spider her web; the bee to form the honey-comb; the beaver to build, and many others in the animal creation; which acting in a wonderful way without the exercise of reason or design, prove the being of God.

The dominion, which man enjoys from the commission of the Almighty over the greater, fiercer, and more formidable of living creatures, which inhabit woods and deserts far from man, and most of them obey and are tamed by him, whom they could easily devour, is another proof of the Deity. How much more is this confirmed by the obsequiousness of those animals, whose strength might put man to defiance, but are by their labour, service and use, continually employed for the advantage and entertainment of the human race.

From the *structure* of the *human body*, we may draw sufficient proof for the being of God. No artist ever pretended to give life or vital motion to their most complete productions: nor can the wisest speculations into the human system tell us in what manner, or by what means the human body is formed; how it is framed in the embryo, preserved, and is brought to perfection in the womb; or how it is increased, nourished and continued in health, strength and vigour for many years. In all these we discover the power and wisdom of God.

If we consider the nature of the human soul, we are much more confirmed in our opinion concerning
the

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the being of a GOD; *who, formed the spirit of man within him.*

If the wisdom and power of GOD is visible in the structure of our bodies, it is much more so in the formation of our souls. We cannot fully describe them, and we know but little of them but by their effects.—Its powers and capacities are various and very extensive.

The soul frames ideas of things above its own nature. It employs itself in contemplating and beholding the order, beauty and connection of all the works in the creation. It recollects what is past with pleasure or regret; and looks forward with joy or uneasiness. It can chuse what is good, and avoid the evil. It can conduct itself according to the principles of reason, and the rules of moral good. It is capable of religion; to know that there is a GOD, to glorify his name, and to be happy in the enjoyments of him: and it is immortal, and not to be destroyed by any creature.

We might further prove the being of a GOD from the nature and office of conscience; whereby the soul takes a view of itself, and its own actions, whether good or evil; and considers itself, as under a law to a superior being, from whom it expects reward or punishment.—From the vast and boundless desires, which are implanted in the soul.—From the consent of all nations; *and* from the works of providence, whereby the world is preserved, and all living are provided with the necessaries of life. But whoever will hearken to these arguments will readily believe such proofs as have been brought from scripture.

Let us consider the excellency of his nature. It will fill our souls with admiration and love; ravish our affections, as well as our wonder.

This our GOD is a spirit. He is not far from every one of us. In him we live, we move, and
have

have our being. We cannot open our eyes, but some footsteps of his glory present themselves to our view: and we cannot turn our eyes towards him, but we shall find his intent upon us, waiting as it were to catch a look, and ready to entertain the most intimate fellowship and communion with us.

Let us therefore endeavour to raise our minds to the clearest conceptions of the divine nature; let us consider all that his works do declare, or his word doth discover of him: and let us especially contemplate that visible representation of him, which was made in our own nature by his son, who was the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and who came into the world to discover at once, what GOD is, and what we ought to be. Let us represent him unto our minds as we find him described in the gospel; and there we shall behold the perfections of the divine nature, though covered with the vail of human infirmities: and when we have framed unto ourselves the clearest notion that we can of a Being infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness, the author and fountain of all perfections, let us fix the eyes of our soul upon it, that our eyes may affect our heart; and while we are musing the fire will burn.

It is every one's duty thus to *seek after God*; and it is also their happiness, *even life eternal to know him*. But by searching to find out the Almighty to *perfection*, is a knowledge too wonderful and too high for a creature to attain unto. His being without a beginning and end, and his presence in every place, without limitation or bounds, is manifest; but no body is able to describe the manner of his eternal existence, and of his universal presence.

What the LORD our GOD said of himself to *Moses*, I AM THAT I AM, is more than the tongue can express, or the heart conceive: now we see him but in a glass darkly. It is not on this side heaven,
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20 *Of the Being and Nature of God.*

but within the veil, that we shall know him as he is.

Here reason must yield itself vanquished, and give way to faith and lowly veneration. Such knowledge is above our reach. We must stay till we are fitted and fortified for the open vision of God, and wait in his light, to see the true light; to know even as also we are known. In the mean time, we ought to throw ourselves at the feet of that most high and immense Deity, who *dwells in the brightness, to which no man can approach: whom no man has seen, or can see: and to whom be honour and power everlasting.*

THE PRAYER.

O LORD GOD almighty, though I am not able to know thee, as thou art, give me a steadfast faith to believe all that thou hast revealed concerning thy power and godhead: that I may have a heart to admire, what I am not able to comprehend, and to adore what I admire. O gracious LORD, I beseech thee, compassionate and relieve the infirmities of my nature; and grant me so much light in my search after thy divine perfections, that I may gain a more distinct and true knowledge of thee; and give me such just and right ideas of the glorious object of that worship, which thou requirest from mankind, that I may fear thee, love thee, adore thee, and serve thee, as the living GOD, and the Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST; in whom and through whom, I offer up all my prayers to thy throne. *Amen.*

C H A P. II.

Of the ATTRIBUTES of GOD.

THE manner, in which GOD the Father hath manifested the knowledge of himself to mankind, is by certain *attributes*: some of which are *incommunicable*, such as cannot be given to any creature: some again are *communicable*, or found under faint resemblances in his creatures.

The *incommunicable* are his omnipresence, and his omniscience, his all-sufficiency, and omnipotence. Yet these attributes, though not communicable to man, are full of instruction, and teach us to be always and in every place fearful how we offend him, who is every where; and knoweth our thoughts, and words long before, and from whom no secrets are hid: to be humble, and to put our full trust in him, and to place our whole dependance upon his providence: and to believe that there is none can deliver us from his justice, and that the LORD our GOD is able both to punish and to reward us according to his word.

GOD is every where; he looks down from heaven and beholds all the children of men. There is no place can hide us from the presence of the LORD: he is about our path and our bed, and he spieth out all our ways. Neither heaven, nor hell, nor the uttermost part of the sea can cover us from his sight; nor can the wings of the morning carry us out of his reach. Where-ever we attempt to flee from his presence he will as certainly find us out, as he did *Adam* and *Eve*, when they hid themselves in the thick of the grove, after their transgression.

The *Christian*, who sincerely believes, that he is always in the presence of the GOD, who made him
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to fulfil his will, and who hateth iniquity, cannot trust in any means to conceal a wicked life. And he, that always sets GOD before him, is in no danger of falling. The terror of divine justice will deter him from evil: the Holy Ghost will give him power to resist and escape temptations; and an assurance of GOD's protection will enable us to bear with patience, and to surmount all the difficulties and dangers of a troublesome and wicked world.

GOD searcheth us out in all our thoughts, words and deeds. He understandeth our thoughts long before: he trieth the reins and the heart: there is not a word in the tongue, but the LORD knoweth it perfectly well; and he understandeth all our works. The darkness is no darkness with him, but the night is as clear as the day: the darkness and light to him are both alike.

How little do they consider this divine attribute, whose thoughts are continually or wilfully taken up in some device to rob GOD of his glory; to explain away the duties of religion, or to defraud and injure their neighbour in his goods and reputation!

How dreadful must it be for such as spend their days in blaspheming, cursing and swearing; in lying, slander, and backbiting, and in that fulsome practice of indecent and immodest discourse!

How carefully ought we all to avoid the deceitfulness of sin: to flee from bad companions: to guard against superstition and idolatry: to keep the Sabbath-day unto the LORD: to be dutiful in our respective stations: to be content with our own, not to covet what belongs to another; and to avoid fornication, adultery, and all other deadly sin!

When we acknowledge that GOD is all-sufficient, or able to supply all our wants, and to do exceedingly above all that we ask, desire or think; it should induce us to seek happiness in him alone, and not to put our trust in his creatures. It should

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teach us to be content with our present condition, and not to desire more than GOD has assigned us; which was the original transgression both in Lucifer and in our first parents. It should deter us from seeking blessings through human inventions, or by unlawful means, as *Rebecca* and *Jacob* did, when they contrived a lie to obtain the blessing. It should engage us to trust his providence, and to depend upon GOD's promises.

This divine perfection may be said to administer support and encouragement to believers, under the greatest straits and difficulties, temptations and trials. When *David* was in the greatest strait he ever had met, when the *Amalekites* spoiled *Ziklag*, and all things seemed to threaten him with ruin and utter destruction, he *encouraged himself* in the all-sufficiency of the Lord his GOD. This was the hope of *Mordecai*; if *Esther* dared not to interceed for the *Jews*, he was confident that *their enlargement and deliverance would come some other way*, even from GOD their Saviour. It was this divine attribute, which encouraged *Abraham* to offer up his son *Isaac*; knowing that GOD was able to raise him from the dead. And we have this sure word of comfort, that let the assault of our spiritual enemies be ever so vigorous, we shall come off victorious, if we believe; because GOD's grace is sufficient for those that fight under the banner of the Lord JESUS.

The almighty power of GOD, as it entirely destroys all dependance upon human strength, and man's device to deliver the creature from his vengeance, and from the sentence of his justice; so it is full of consolation to such as are furiously attacked by spiritual enemies. Though we *wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places*, the power of GOD is able to deliver us from them all. GOD is able to bruise satan under
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our feet; to make us more than conquerors, to cause all grace to abound in us, and to work in the creature what is pleasing in the sight of the Creator.

A consideration of this almighty power gives the greatest reason to conclude, that whatever difficulties lie in the way of the accomplishment of his promises, relating to our future happiness, they shall be removed or surmounted: so that those things, which seem impossible (if we look no further than the ministry of second causes, or the little appearance there may be of their being brought about, at present) are not only possible, but very easy for the power of GOD to effect.

A comfortable lesson to the sinner, sinking into despair, under a sense of the guilt or power of his sins; on which account he shall be ready to conclude, that his burden is so heavy, that no finite power can remove it: for here he will be convinced, if he thoroughly believes that GOD is almighty, that all things are possible to him. He can by the power of his word, and the influence of his spirit, raise the most dejected spirits, and turn the shadow of death into a bright morning of peace and joy.

If we consider the declining state of Christianity: or if the question be put, Can the despised, declining, sinking and dying interest of CHRIST be revived? his saints are still encouraged with the hope, that the power of GOD is able to support his church, and to give it the victory over the gates of hell.

In this attribute of the power of God, we have the foundation of our belief in the resurrection of the dead. This is a doctrine, that seems contrary to the course of nature: and to look no further than the power of the creature, we might be inclined to ask, How can this thing be? But what says the Lord CHRIST, *If ye doubt of the resurrection, ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of GOD.*

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When we are engaged in holy duties, and are sensible of our inability, by nature, to perform them in a right manner; and we have too much reason to complain of an unbecoming frame of spirit in those duties; of the hardness and impenitence of our hearts; of the obstinacy and perverseness of our wills; of the earthliness and carnality of our affections; and that the best of our endeavours to bring ourselves into a better frame of mind, have not their desired success, let us encourage ourselves with this belief, that God can make us *willing in the day of his power, and do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.*

Let us take heed that we do not abuse, or practically deny, or cast contempt on this divine perfection, by presuming that we can obtain spiritual blessings, without dependence on him for them; or by expecting divine influences, while we continue in the neglect of his instituted means of grace. God is able to work without means; but he has not given us ground to expect that he will do so: and therefore, when we seek help or a blessing from him, it must be in his own way.

Let us also take heed not to abuse this divine perfection by a distrust in the LORD our maker, or by a dependance on an arm of flesh. For it is *he that hath stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth: and there is none that can deliver us out of his hands.*

THE PRAYER.

O GOD the Father, who art present with me where-ever I am, and knowest all things, and art all-sufficient, and the almighty LORD of heaven and earth, I am covered with shame and confusion, and am terribly afraid, when I remember the sin and evil, which I have committed against thy laws; and

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the wrath and judgments, which I deserve at thy hands. I should verily sink under the load of my offences, and despair of thy mercy, was I not fully persuaded of the riches of thy grace, and of thy power to deliver me from the bonds of satan, and all the powers of darkness. Let thy presence be a continual guard to all my actions. Let thy infinite knowledge cleanse my heart and my reins from all iniquity, and prepare my soul to receive the dictates of thy holy spirit: and make me know and feel that thou art all-sufficient, and that I am safe under the shadow of thy wings. Yet, as I can have no boldness, nor access with confidence, when I prostrate myself before thee for pardon and forgiveness, but only through faith in thy son, who died to atone for my transgression; to make my peace; to set me right with the offended majesty of heaven; and not only to turn away thy displeasure from me, but to incline thy love towards me, and to make thy face to shine upon me; grant me good hope through grace; and let CHRIST in me be my hope of glory. Give me the spirit of adoption, that I may appear with confidence towards thee my GOD, and in thy presence with joy and gladness, through JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

SECT. II. Of GOD'S ATTRIBUTES.

The *communicative attributes* of GOD are wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness and mercy. In all these we are capable of imitating the supreme Being, though not to perfection; and we are called upon and obliged to do it.

In all the forms, by which the wisdom of GOD is displayed, we shall always find that it was employed about nothing that was evil. In wisdom he created the world and all things therein: and behold, when they

they came out of the hands of their creator, man was *upright*, and all things were *very good*. In wisdom GOD provides for all creatures, in so much that a sparrow cannot escape his wise protection. In wisdom mankind were redeemed and reconciled to the divine justice. In wisdom the church of CHRIST is built up and defended against the violence and subtilty of worldly and spiritual enemies.

How should this exercise of the wisdom of GOD affect our lives and conversation? It teacheth us that we are not to employ this gift of GOD to bad purposes. When wisdom degenerates into cunning craft or deceit, it becomes a snare; for, those are the *wise, whom GOD taketh in their own craftiness*. Neither must we seek after more wisdom than GOD has thought sufficient for our nature. The presumption to attain to more wisdom than GOD had given them, was the offence of our first parents; by which, they fell from that uprightness, in which they had been created.

Be not wise in our own conceits. We cannot understand the meaning of some particular dispensations of providence. Those secret things belong to GOD: we are to be content with what is revealed, and to admire the wisdom of GOD, where his doings with us are above our understanding. So far we may venture in our speculations into the divine dispensations, as to compare all the parts of providence together; by which, if it be GOD's will, we may arrive hereafter at the knowledge of those things, which we at present cannot understand. While we subject our understandings unto GOD, and entertain a due veneration for his word, in which his wisdom is displayed, we shall be made wise unto salvation; and never reject or despise those mysteries, which are contained therein, because we are not able to comprehend them.

The wisdom which is from above, or according to the pattern of the divine attribute, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And if any of us lack this wisdom, let him ask it of GOD, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.

GOD is most holy. Holiness is his very nature and essence. *There is none holy as the LORD: for, there is none besides him.* In which we are taught that GOD is infinitely opposite to all moral blemishes and imperfections; to every thing that tends to reflect dishonour or reproach upon his divine perfections.

The holiness of GOD is not to be accounted so much one single perfection, as the harmony of all his perfections, as they stand in opposition to sin. Hence it is stiled *the beauty of the LORD*; and this beauty appears in all his works. He created angels and men with a perfect rectitude of nature, without the least spot, or propensity to sin, and with a power to retain that holiness. He also gave them a law, which was *holy*, as well as just and good, and warned them of the dreadful consequences that would follow the violation thereof, as it would render them unholy, deprive them of his image, and consequently separate them from him, and render them the objects of his abhorrence.

They that believe in the holiness of GOD, must confess that he can neither do, nor enjoin any thing, but what sets forth his infinite purity; and consequently that he cannot be the author of sin.

Holiness is the image of GOD in man. The purity of the divine nature is not to be attained unto by any creature; but it must be copied by man. *We must be holy, as GOD is holy: and without holiness no man can see the Lord.*

Under the law GOD revealed himself in these express words: *I am the Lord your GOD; which have separated*

separated you from other people, and ye shall be holy unto me; for, I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine. The people of GOD are to resign themselves unto, and to endeavour, as much as possible, to resemble the divine holiness.

Under the gospel we are instructed, that the only way for man to recover this resemblance, is to be renewed in holiness and righteousness; to take care that both our souls and bodies may be preserved pure and unblameable; that we cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and that we strive to perfect holiness in the fear of GOD. It were better for us not to have known the way of righteousness, than after we have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto us. Impiety under a religious mask is a mockery of GOD, and seals irrevocable ruin to those that are in love with it.

The extent of our holiness is very clearly set forth by the apostle, where he says, it ought to be *in all manner of conversation.* This condemns the blasphemous, profane, obscene, and all irregular flights of wanton wits and depraved wills: and enjoins us, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of GOD. When we are employed in religious affairs, let it be with due reverence, and a holy awe towards GOD. In our ordinary employments, we must manage with prudence; make our worldly affairs subservient to more noble objects, and to conduct us to matters of a more sublime nature. While we pass through things temporal our conversation must be in heaven.

Whilst we are in the world, we must converse with those who live in it: but let us converse with whom we will, we must not forget our christianity. With the good we are to promote grace mutually in ourselves and them. Our words and actions should aim at the glory of GOD, the honour of our religion,

gion, and the encouragement of one another to labour for an increase of piety and a strengthening of faith. If it be our lot to fall into company with the wicked, we must bear testimony against their errors, and misdemeanours, by seasonable reproof; by a rational detection of their obliquity, and by an abhorrence of their impiety and sinfulness.

Holiness calls upon us in the general course of our lives to act inoffensively towards all men, so as not to give them any just occasion to be displeased with us. All the passages of our lives should imitate an unwillingness to exasperate or provoke any one, except our forbearance to sin be that which would incense him.

Hence we learn, that though we are expected to *be holy, as he who called us is holy*, it is not meant, that we are able to attain an absolute, essential, independent and infinite holiness; but only that we should aim at higher attainments in a derivative holiness; that we should be continually thriving in our spiritual state, and add one grace to another, till we make our holiness perfect in the fear of GOD, and arrive at the full stature of CHRIST. *Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for, they shall be filled. The pure in heart shall see GOD.*

The justice of GOD differs very little from his holiness. Holiness is a contrariety, or an opposition of his nature to sin: justice is an external and visible display thereof. However, when GOD is said to be *just*, he is particularly considered as the governor of the world: and when he appears in the glory of his justice, he bears the character of a judge, judging according to every man's work, and doing right without respect of persons.

According to the most common acceptation of this attribute, we are to understand either his *disposing*, or his *distributive* justice.

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The *disposing justice* is a giving rewards to his creatures, such as the heavenly glory, or that *crown of righteousness*, which the LORD has promised to give to his people, in that day, when he shall appear in the glory of his justice, to judge the world in righteousness. Which, and such like passages in the scripture, are not to be understood of a reward due to their merit; but they import a necessary and inseparable connection, that is between grace wrought in us and glory conferred upon us. It is a reward to encourage us to duty, without supposing that, what we do, has any thing meritorious in it.

If we ourselves are less than the least of all God's mercies, then our best actions must be so; for the action cannot have more honour ascribed unto it than the agent: or, if *when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants*, we must conclude that the *crown of righteousness* is a reward not of debt, but of grace. It is not a bestowing a blessing purchased by us, but for us. CHRIST is the purchaser, man is the receiver. So it is strictly and properly the reward of his merit; but in its application the gift of his grace.

Distributive justice, or (as it is also termed) vindictive justice, is that act by which GOD punishes sin, as an injury offered to his divine perfections, an affront to his sovereignty, a reflection on his holiness, and a violation of his laws; for which he demands satisfaction, and inflicts punishment, proportioned to the nature of the crime, which he continues to do till satisfaction be given.

This is called GOD's *visiting iniquity*, and his *visiting for it*: *setting his face against a person, and cutting him off from amongst his people*. And when GOD does this, his wrath is compared to flames of fire; which is called the *fire of his jealousy*: and they who are objects of it are said to *fall into the hands of the living GOD, who is a consuming fire*.

An eminent instance of GOD's vindictive justice, and of his hatred to sin, is the inflicting that punishment, which was due to our sins, on the person of CHRIST, who, though he *knew no sin, was made sin for us*; becoming surety for all mankind, and utterly making satisfaction for us all.

Another instance of GOD's vindictive justice, is his punishment of sin in the persons of finally impenitent sinners in hell; where a demand of satisfaction is perpetually made, but can never be given: therefore this punishment is called, everlasting destruction from the presence of the LORD, and from the glory of his power.

Vindictive power is also taken in a less proper sense, as, when believers, who are justified upon the account of the satisfaction, which CHRIST has given for their sins, are said to be punished for them, as in *Ezra ix. 13.* and in *Psal. lxxxix. 30—33.* *Micah vii. 9.* And as these evils are exceedingly afflictive, being oftentimes attended with a sad apprehension and fear of the wrath of GOD; so they are called punishments, because sin is the cause of them; yet they differ from punishment in its most proper sense: for, tho' justice inflicts evil on them for sin, yet it doth not herein demand satisfaction; because that is supposed to have been given, they being considered as justified: and it is not agreeable to the nature of justice, to demand satisfaction twice. Therefore GOD's design in those afflictive dispensations is to humble themselves greatly, and to shew them the demerit of sin. They may be properly called castigatory punishments: for, such persons are friends and not enemies of GOD: *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

Hence we are instructed, that the crown of righteousness is not to be put upon the head of any one, but him that runs the *Christian* race; and that we are not presumptuously to ascribe the reward to our per-

performances or works, which is wholly founded on CHRIST's merit. What good we receive is through CHRIST, and therefore the glory thereof is to be ascribed to him.

Let us reflect upon the evil and heinous nature of sin, and take warning thereby, that we may not expose ourselves to the same or like judgments; but flee from the wrath to come, and make a right improvement of the price of redemption, which was given by CHRIST, to deliver his people from it.

The first display of GOD's *goodness* was in giving a being to all things. And all the excellencies and advantages, which one creature is blessed with above another, are as so many streams flowing from this fountain; *he giveth to all life, breath and all things. In him we live, we move, and have our being.*

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. From him the land becomes fruitful, and gives her increase in due time. Summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, heat and cold, are ordained by him for our benefit. He giveth food to all flesh; and virtue to those medicines, which relieve our infirmities and cure our diseases. It is owing to his goodness, that we are not consumed, and brought to a fearful end by storms, winds, and tempests; and by the violence and stratagems of wicked people. It is GOD's goodness that we are blessed with a true knowledge of his will, and with faculties to worship him in spirit and in truth.

It is the goodness of GOD, that leadeth us to repentance. He wills not the death of a sinner; but rather that we should be converted and live. *He is a GOD ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness. He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear. He is good to such as are of a clean heart, delivereth them out of all their troubles, and turneth the curse into a blessing.*

34 Of the Attributes of God.

This divine goodness extends even beyond the grave. The Psalmist under the heaviest load of trouble declares, that he should certainly *have fainted, unless he had believed*, or had been thoroughly persuaded, that *he should see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living*. Our days are few, and full of misery. So that, *if in this life only we have hope in CHRIST, we are of all men most miserable*.

This attribute requires of us to use God's creatures so as not to abuse them: to promote the happiness of our fellow-creatures, and to do good unto all men. But above all, it points out that faith, which assures us, that there is an after-state, wherein God will distinguish between such as fear him, and serve him, and such as fear him not, in another manner, than is done in this life. Here the wicked flourish, increase in riches, have more than heart can wish; whilst the best men are often in the worst condition, and that upon account of their being so. But this is only a world of trial. It is in the next life that God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Though godliness be attended with many sufferings, we are not left without relief, if so be we trust in the goodness of God; become new creatures, and live by faith upon what is promised to them, who imitate the divine goodness.

The *mercy* of God considers its object as miserable, and is illustrated by all those distressing circumstances, which make sinners the objects of compassion. We are by nature born in sin, children of wrath, and slaves to the devil. It is God's mercy which sets us free, and delivers them, *who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage*. And we are by nature dead in sin, alienated from the life of God, and unable to do what is spiritually good. Yet, was our condition so miserable, as to be without God in the world, and without hope, God's mercy would *remember us in our low estate*, and say

say unto us, *Live: he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.*

This mercy may be considered either in a common, or in a special meaning.

Common mercies are those outward conveniencies of life, which are bestowed without distinction. *His tender mercies are over all his works. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and he sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

The special mercy of GOD is that, which he bestows on, or has reserved for, the heirs of salvation, communicated to us in a covenant-way, in and through a mediator, as the *Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, the Father of mercies, and the GOD of all comfort.*

In this perfection of the almighty Father, we discover his free and sovereign *grace*. For, he bestows his favours in a discriminating way, giving to one the blessing he denies unto, or with-holds from another, purely because it seemeth good in his sight so to deal with his creatures.

This appears in the salvation which GOD wrought for men, rather than for the fallen angels. The son of GOD *did not take upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham*, that all mankind should be saved through him, and the disobedient angels he reserved in chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

Amongst men this discriminating grace is also manifest. Though GOD *so loved the world, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, the number that partake of salvation through CHRIST is so small, compared to the unworthy part of mankind, that they are called a *little flock*, and the gate, through which they enter into life eternal, is described to be *strait*, and the way so narrow, that *few are able to find it*. Thus, we may observe, that a man renowned for the gifts of nature, and for the

good things of this world, that thrives under the verge of common providence, may be destitute of special grace; and that the poor and despised in the world make their calling and election sure. See 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28.

GOD has not only called us to a state of salvation, but he fits and disposes men for it. Thus, in the work of conversion, he by his grace, infused into the soul, breaks through, and overcomes, the reluctance and opposition which corrupt nature makes against it; subdues the enmity and rebellion that is in the heart of man, and works a powerful change in the will, whereby, contrary to the natural bias and inclination thereof, he subjects it to himself. This was the case of *Paul*, who was at one time a *blasphemer, persecutor, injurious, and the chief of sinners*: and of those *fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind; thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, unjust, unmerciful, disobedient, &c.* who, by the grace of GOD, were *washed, sanctified, justified, made light in the Lord*, and brought into the way of truth and peace.

These are the people, whose hearts were once impenitent, unrelenting, and inclined to sin, without remorse, or self-reflection: nothing could make an impression on them, as being past feeling, alienate from the life of GOD, blinded by the god of this world, and giving themselves over to *work all uncleanness with greediness*. But now they are penitent, humble, relenting, and broken under the sense of sin; afraid of every thing that may be an occasion thereof; willing to be reprov'd for it, and desirous to be set at a greater distance from it. Once they were destitute of hope, or solid peace of conscience; but now they have hope and joy in believing, and are delivered from that bondage, to which they were disposed before. A change, which GOD bestows at such seasons, as seems to his wisdom and goodness
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most suitable and adapted to our condition. Thus we may observe, that when straits and difficulties are the greatest, God's grace does most abound; he sends forth his relief, when sinners have wearied themselves in the greatness of their way, seeking rest and happiness in things below, without finding any satisfaction; and when they are brought to the utmost extremity, then he appears in their behalf. In like manner, when the believing heart is overwhelmed, and ready to faint at the prospect of its sins, at the number and power of its temptations, and with the fear of being forsaken of God, then he appears in the fulness of his grace, and *leads them to the rock, that is higher than they, and brings them, that are desolate and afflicted, out of all their distresses.*

If we look forward, and consider what God has prepared for them, that die in his favour, we still are led to a greater display of his grace. The hope, that is laid up in heaven for believers, is greater than can be expressed in words: of which the Psalmist has left us a noble idea in this note of admiration.—*O how great is the goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them, that trust in thee, before the sons of men!*

THE PRAYER.

O LORD GOD, glorious in majesty and honour, righteous in all thy ways, holy in all thy works; whose seat is prepared in heaven, and whose kingdom ruleth over all; how can I presume to approach thee, who am a man of unclean lips: O touch my heart and my lips with a coal from off thy altar, and say unto me, thine iniquity is taken away from thee, and thy sin is purged; and then thou wilt strengthen thy servant, and I will speak unto thee.

Thou dwellest in thy high and holy place, upon the throne of thy glory, between the cherubims, and art

38 *Of the divine Decrees and Promises.*

art attended with ten thousand times ten thousand blessed spirits, that stand before thee, and minister unto thee: how infinite is thy goodness, so to humble thyself, as to behold the things done upon the earth, and to direct and over-rule every thing by the hand of thy wise providence, as to distribute thy justice and mercy, according to men's works, requiting the wicked, and justifying the righteous. Oh, teach me the way to draw near to thee by profound humility, resignation of my will, and self-abasement in thy sight! For, it is, when I am thus low, in a due prostration of my soul, that thou wilt put forth thine hand, lift me up, and be my support. I believe that thou, who dwellest in the high and holy place, will also come and take up thy abode in him, that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the spirit of contrite ones.

Let, O LORD, my heart, by thy grace, become quite empty of myself, that thou mayest fill it, and I may become an habitation for thy spirit of holiness and purity. Give me grace, O GOD, so to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, that walking before thee, with care and caution, in this life, I may, with humble confidence and comfort, see thy face at the last day, through thy gracious acceptance of me in thy beloved Son, JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

Of the divine DECREES and PROMISES.

ALL events in time depend upon the counsel of GOD's own will: for, the divine record expressly witnesseth, that *he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.* Therefore, having searched into, and meditated upon the perfections of the Almighty, let us now enquire, what GOD has purposed

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to do from all eternity, in regard to the intelligent part of the creation.

In this enquiry, we are to know that GOD being *wonderful in counsel and excellent in working*, all his works are done advisedly and with wisdom; and that the object of his decrees is every thing that has, or shall come to pass.

By this we learn, that nothing comes to pass by chance, with respect to GOD, but by the direction of his providence; and consequently, that nothing is done without the divine influence or permission, not excepting sin: for, if sin might be committed without divine permission, it could not be restrained by GOD. Nevertheless GOD is not the author of sin, neither does he approve thereof; because, it is one thing to suffer, or not to hinder, and another thing to be the author of any thing.

He that knoweth all things long before, never acts, or suffers any thing to be done, but he knows beforehand, what he will do, or suffer. There is not a word in our tongue, nor a thought in our heart, but *he knoweth it altogether*. How then can it be doubted, that he knoweth what he himself will do, or what shall be done in the world, by the interposition of his providence, or what he will suffer to be done, before it is acted?

Whatever GOD does, and knows beforehand, that he will do it, we must believe that he had before determined to do it. Consequently, GOD does determine before, or foreordain whatever comes to pass; and as he never began to determine, nor to exist, nor is without resolution to execute his decrees, it must be confessed, that he foreordained, from eternity, whatever should come to pass, either in time or eternity.

Thus he determined to create the world and all things therein, before he gave existence to them. *In wisdom*

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wisdom he made them all: and he made them for wise and good ends, even for his own glory.

GOD cannot design any thing in his eternal purpose, as the highest end, but his own glory: yet he has purposed, not only that this should be brought about, by means conducive thereunto, but that there should be a subserviency of one thing to another: all which are likewise the objects of his decree, as well as his own glory, the highest end thereof. Hence his blessing attends the means used to promote health, and those ordained to confer grace: however, the medicine does not always restore the patient, nor the sacrament strengthen and refresh the soul. Even so GOD determined to create the world, and then created it very good: but, though he did not decree that it should be wicked, he foresaw that sin would enter into the world, and that many would depart from his commandments. He, in his foreknowledge, provided for the salvation of men; he first determined to bestow the means of grace upon them, and to render them effectual for the salvation of all, who shall be saved, and then does it accordingly. So, in respect to his judicial acting, he first determined, by a permissive decree, not to prevent the commission of sin, though infinitely opposite to his holiness; and, then knowing the consequence of this permissive decree, or that men, through the mutability or corruption of their nature, would rebel against him, he determined to punish sin after it should be committed. In all which we learn, that GOD's will is the true cause of man's happiness, and man's own will the cause of his ruin: that all divine acts are decrees, are acts of GOD's own will, not being under any obligation, or restraint to bestow favours on mankind: that all his purposes are most free, wise and holy; for, all his works are performed in *wisdom*; he is *righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*. They are

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are also from all eternity, unchangeable, respect whatever comes to pass, reach persons, as well as things, and extend to the means as well as the end.

This naturally leads us to consider the *promises* of GOD. A doctrine full of comfort and consolation; and in some manner, assisteth in the explanation of certain points arising from the consideration of the divine decrees.

The first promise of GOD was to our first parents in paradise. He promised the continuance of his favour and immortality, should they keep the law or the commandment he gave them; and threatened them with the loss of his favour, and with the first and second death, should they break the commandment.

Their transgression made this promise null and void; and the sovereign Lawgiver was obliged by his truth, justice and holiness, to put the law in force, and to inflict the threatened penalties.

However, in the midst of justice, the LORD remembered mercy, and made a second promise: he revealed to the transgressors his mind and will concerning the pardon of their sin, and promised them a Saviour, who should bruise the serpent's head, and thereby destroy his power. The promised seed was to undertake this work: and for this purpose, was the son of GOD manifested in the flesh, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Thus we are taught, that this and all the following promises of grace and mercy centre in JESUS CHRIST; and every promise made in CHRIST is an act of GOD's free grace, which being made, his perfections bind him to fulfill: and as he has engaged in the promise to give the grace and blessing therein mentioned, to those who believe in JESUS CHRIST, so the believer's happiness consists in living by faith upon the promises.

Faith acknowledgeth and receives CHRIST, as held forth in the promise, and thereby gets possession of

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of the promised blessing. While faith is kept thus in act and exercise, the believer walks safely and comfortably, having the promise of GOD to support him in every state and circumstance of life, and to carry him through all trials and troubles; which promise cannot fail. All the perfections of the Almighty stand engaged to see it fulfilled; and when faith calls upon GOD, and relies upon him for the fulfilling of his promise, he cannot deny himself, or break the word that is gone out of his mouth. Faith brings down his almighty power, to make a way for the fulfilling of the promise; and thus the believer receives a support under all dangers, safety against all enemies, and a cordial against all troubles. He staggers not at the promise of GOD through unbelief; but is strong in faith, giving glory to GOD, who gives grace to him, and confirms and strengthens his faith.

If we enquire into the nature of the divine promises, they are *acts* of GOD's *free grace*; whereby he stands engaged in his word to bestow upon believers all the blessings, which were purchased by the obedience and sufferings of JESUS CHRIST.

Man had broken the law, and was subject to all the pains and penalties threatened to transgression: and if GOD had been extreme to execute judgment upon the transgressors, and left him without a promise of redemption, he must have dragged on a miserable life, under the terrors of a guilty conscience, until summoned to appear before the justice-seat of an offended creator: where being tried and convicted, how could he escape the damnation of hell? But it pleased GOD in the midst of judgment to make a promise of mercy, and to provide for man's salvation by a covenant of grace: wherein he made a free promise of deliverance from all the miseries of sin, as it is revealed and recorded in his word; and engaged that this promise shall be made good to believers for ever and ever.

Thus

Thus the merit of all that JESUS did and suffered is made ours by faith; that faith, which is one of the blessings purchased by him, amongst the rest of the benefits of his passion, bestowed upon believers by the operation of his holy spirit, who works with, and animates, the incorruptible seed of the word, rendering it the means of forming faith in their hearts.

The almighty Father has not only vouchsafed, of his free grace, to promise this *plenteous redemption*; but, knowing what power unbelief had over careless sinners, and how hard it was to bring convinced sinners to believe; and how believers would be tempted to entertain doubts and fears, he in condescension to human infirmities, has given us the most full and perfect security for fulfilling his promises, that the case could admit of. For, every promise is confirmed by his revealed word; which word is truth itself. *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but, my words, saith GOD, shall not pass away. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.* Neither can his mind alter or change; for, *with GOD there is no variableness or shadow of turning. My covenant, says he, will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my mouth. Nor is GOD a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or, hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Here then is safe ground for faith to stand upon.

GOD willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for GOD to lie, we might have a stronger consolation, who have fled for refuge; to lay hold of the hope set before us. The LORD, therefore having sworn that he will be reconciled to sinners, and that he will pardon as many as seek it through CHRIST, we have
no

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no room to fear that he will repent. Such is the security a gracious GOD has given to the heirs of promise. It is given upon the most full and complete evidence that any promise can have.

As it is impossible any of these securities should fail, how comes it, that unbelieving doubts arise in the mind and tempt any one to think they can fail! They that give way to such doubts, will soon be deprived of all peace and comfort of soul: for though we be heirs, and joint-heirs with CHRIST, to an inheritance of infinite value, it is chiefly in reversion: we have little in possession, at present, but the promises. We are heirs of promise, and if we lose our reliance on the promises, we lose sight of the evidence of our estate, and the comfortable hope of our inheriting it.

It would be most ungrateful to a gracious GOD, and injurious to our eternal interest, to doubt, when he has provided such immutable things for faith and hope to rest upon. So that, when even doubts and fears arise about the promises of GOD, say, *O Lord keep thy servant from this great wickedness, and strengthen my faith, that it fail not.* They that thus go to the throne of grace shall find help in time of need.

Who then would not desire to be an heir of promise? GOD offers us pardon: we are guilty, he offers us free justification. He promises his son to be our Saviour; his spirit to be our sanctifier; his grace to be our strength; his glory to be our eternal inheritance. He opens his treasure, and invites us to come, and to receive freely of him unsearchable and inestimable riches. Let us then accept his gracious invitation, and hearken no longer to the lying and deceitful promises of sin.

Though our sins be as red as scarlet, and as numerous as the sand of the sea-shore, we are they to whom the promises are made; and by relying on them we make them sure. The greatness of our
sins

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sin should humble us, but not drive us to despair. Though our heart be wholly set to do evil, and be desperately wicked, there is no reason to doubt and to despair of God's promises; for he will give *a new heart*, and put *a new spirit* within every one, that prays to him for a clean heart and a right spirit. And when we are cleansed from the guilt of sin, the LORD has promised that his grace shall be sufficient for us, and that sin shall have no more dominion over us. For, our corruptions, be they ever so many, or ever so strong, shall be subdued by his almighty grace.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, give unto me the increase of faith, hope and charity, and that I may obtain that which thou dost promise, make me to love that which thou dost command, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP. IV.

Of God's Works of Creation and Providence.

GOD's decrees and promises lead us to an enquiry into their objects; which we shall find in his works of creation and providence.

By the work of creation, we understand that act of the Almighty, by which he made the heavens, the earth, the seas, and all living creatures that move therein, after their different kinds, out of nothing. A work peculiar to God: and therefore it is a glory, which he often appropriates to himself in scripture, calling himself, by way of eminence, *the creator of the ends of the earth*. For, he adds in another place, *I have made the earth by myself, and created*
man

man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

This work was performed in the beginning of time. *In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth. Therefore beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, who after the rudiments of this world and not after the knowledge we have by faith in CHRIST, teach a contrary doctrine, to persuade you that the world is eternal.*

In this great work the creator performed every thing by the word of his power. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He commanded and they were created.* It was performed without any manner of difficulty.

The inducement or end for which GOD created the world was *for himself*, to manifest his eternal power and godhead, and all those divine perfections, which shine forth in this illustrious work. Not that we are to suppose GOD can receive any additional glory or happiness, but that he might be admired and adored by a rational and grateful people; or that his relative glory might be advanced by us, and thereby we might partake of his eternal happiness.

Every thing was made perfect in its kind; very good and without blemish. The imperfections, that are now in the creature, are the effects of that curse, which sin brought upon the work of an all-powerful, wise and good GOD.

Man alone was distinguished and favoured above all the works of the creation. He was made in the image and after the likeness of GOD. He was invested with authority, power and dominion, over all the other parts of the sublunary creation. All things and creatures were made for his use and convenience. He alone was endued with a soul capable of knowing, and of adoring his maker with thanksgiving.

What

What a noble field have we here to expatiate upon by serious meditation. *O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord, how wonderful in his doing towards the children of men; they are more than I am able to express: yet, it is our duty to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to declare the wonders that he hath done for the children of men.*

How can we believe that this world and all it contains were made by the word of God, and not tremble at the breath of his displeasure? How dare we offend him, *at whose wrath the earth trembleth and quaketh, the very foundations also of the hills shake, and are removed: from whose presence there goeth a smoke, and a consuming fire out of his mouth: and at whose chiding the springs of the waters are seen, and the foundations of the round world are discovered?* And how can we doubt of the truth contained in the scripture account of the creation, when *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work: when one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another: and when so many concurring testimonies appear to convince us that the sea is his, and he made it; that his hands prepared the dry land and all that therein is: that the day is his, and the night is his, and that he prepared the light and the sun: that he has set all the borders of the earth, and made summer and winter: that he hath made the north and the south, and bringeth the winds out of his treasures: that he hath set bounds to the sea, which they shall not pass, and sendeth springs into the rivers.* And, above all, when we consider how fearfully and wonderfully man is made; how the thoughts of God are to us ward, and how the end of the creation was intended to make us happy hereafter, we must confess that *the word of the Lord is true, and all his works are faithful;* and acknowledge the great things, which the LORD our maker has done for us.

Our very existence is a pure act of his divine will. God was not obliged to create us. He had done us

no wrong had we slept for ever in our first nothing. But, how are we much more indebted for that superiority, in which man is placed, above the rest of the creation. He was created a little lower than the angels, that he might be crowned with glory and worship: a creature capable of knowing his creator, of loving and adoring him in this life, and of seeing and enjoying him for ever. Our body is erect and pointing towards heaven; not crawling on the earth, but of most wonderful construction, and carrying an awe in its presence, that strikes terror into the animal creation. Our soul is made capable of communion with God, and to receive the highest favours from him. It is, therefore, our duty so to pass through things temporal, that we may make sure of things eternal. The sense of his majesty and glory should so possess and fill our souls, that we may tremble to offend him, and stand in awe of his word.

Oh! how thankful ought we to be for all those privileges and blessings we enjoy above the brutes? How obedient to his word, who has done so well for us? How careful to employ those noble faculties to his praise, by which he has enabled us to bring him glory?

To acknowledge that God made every thing good, and to put them to a bad use; yea, even to abuse our own bodies, which the LORD of heaven has stamped with his own image, is a paradox, which none but frail man could ever be guilty of; and calls upon us for a speedy amendment. We are here taught to renounce the pomps and vanities of a wicked world, and not to prostitute any of God's works to inflame the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, or the pride of life.

Neither are we to imagine, because God made every thing good, and in wisdom, and the world is full of his riches, that we are to look for happiness upon the earth. This world is insufficient to make us happy.

happy. The happiness, on account of which alone life is worth having, *does not consist in the abundance of those things, which a man possesseth.* The soul of the rich man, who boasted of his possessions, and put his trust in them, *was required of him* in the same night, after he had solaced himself in the much goods he had laid up for many years.

A man shall want nothing this world can afford; yet may be very miserable, in danger of that eternal misery, wherein he was confined, who had received his good things in this world; and also for want of what is commonly called felicity in this life. Riches cannot prevent diseases nor unavoidable disasters, nor quiet the inordinate passions, discontents and tumults that rage within him. It is not what goeth into the mouth of a man, that defileth him, but what cometh out of his heart. So neither is it what a man has without, but what he is within, that can give him true comfort and satisfaction of life. As long as the mind is sick, guilty and uneasy, the whole man is upon a rack, let his enjoyments without appear ever so great.

Worldly felicity is of this nice and slippery nature, that it may be overturned in a moment by the most unexpected and smallest accident. Was not *Haman* advanced above all the princes, and distinguished with as many favours, as the greatest potentate upon the earth could heap upon him; yet *all this* *availed him nothing* so long as he saw himself despised by *Mordecai* the poor Jew, who at the king's gate, *did not bow to him nor do him reverence?* *Ahab* had all the kingdom of *Israel* at his command; yet took his bed, and was ready to die with vexation, because *Naboth* would not oblige him with his little vineyard.

Thus many that have the largest possessions in this tumultuous world, have most of the disturbances, and the least share of its comfortable enjoyments.

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He that is greedy of gain, does but trouble his own house. To fill his house with the world's goods, he empties himself of hearts-ease. To seek for riches by sinful means, and to make a bad use of them, that have been acquired by the most lawful means, is equally to deprive them of that goodness, with which all things were created.

The voluptuous epicure does but help to ruin that very pleasure, which is the only end he aims at, by his extravagant methods of pleasing the flesh. He by an intemperate use of good things breaks his rest and ease, renders his life a clog to nature, and himself a scorn. He acquires nothing but disappointment and shame, remorse and smart, and too late wishes, that he had been wiser, and made a better use of GOD's good works. Such is the happiness of those whose affections are wholly fixed on this world; whose portion is in this life.

This calls aloud to alarm our care, that what GOD has created for our use, prove not such a dead weight, as to pull us from him, and to pin us down to the earth; nor such a bar to our improvement in grace, as to shut us out of heaven. Let none think he has GOD's toleration to be less faithful and obedient to his precepts, because he happens to enjoy more wealth, or more knowledge: but rather let him account himself obliged by those extraordinary gifts of the LORD, to be beforehand with others in his holy service; to exalt his name, and to promote his religion. He ought to make himself as distinguishable for a godly life, as the LORD has made him distinguished for worldly wealth. It is not enough to be accounted a substantial, a wealthy and a just man in the esteem of the world, if at the last he shall not be received by the LORD with this welcome, *Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter now into the joy of thy Lord.*

If

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If we desire to relish GOD's creatures in their pure natural goodness, we must use them with temperance, and receive them with thanksgiving. We must not gape and range after the gaities and pleasures of the world, as if they were the end for which we were born; but we ought to be shy and afraid of them, when the good things of the creation are employed in pomps and vanities. We must so use the creature, that its goodness may contribute towards the attainment of those pleasures, which are at the right hand of GOD for evermore; and of that kingdom, of which there is no end.

By the WORKS of PROVIDENCE, we are to understand the works of GOD in time; and therefore, providence may be defined *the will of GOD governing all things according to his own wisdom and counsel*: or, it is the power, wisdom and counsel of GOD, preserving, ordering and governing all things and persons to certain ends and purposes, according as it seems best unto him.

His providence is proved from the very nature of GOD. GOD is infinite in wisdom, which supposes that nothing can be hid from his sight: infinite in goodness, which, being communicative of itself, cannot be supposed to look unconcerned and with indifference upon the works of his hands, especially considering that there is infinite power always ready to execute what wisdom shall contrive, and what infinite goodness shall chuse.

If we look into the world, every thing is full of divine providence. Every creature bears the name of its creator; and the footsteps of his goodness are impressed on all orders of things, on all actions, and in all effects, from the highest to the lowest part of the creation.

Look upon the heavens, and the light of the stars is not more visible, than the eye of providence is in that light. The day to work, and the night to rest in: the vicissitudes of the seasons, of seed-time and

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harvest; so that *man is enabled to go forth unto his work and unto his labour until the evening*; and we are supplied with the necessities of life by the cultivation of the earth; are blessings which we owe to the divine providence.

The providence of GOD made the air thin and transparent, that it should not any where obstruct the light of the sun descending upon us; but in the lowest regions, to draw up vapours and cold in the middle regions, to thicken those vapours into clouds, and those clouds into rain, to water and to refresh; to enrich and to impregnate the land.

If we explore the seas, we shall discover an universal treasure and fountain of moisture: a great magazine of fish and other useful things; and a communication by shipping with the most distant parts of the earth.

The earth or dry land is made firm to walk upon, and is productive of all things necessary and convenient both for man and beast. The mountains are the chambers of the springs, and the valleys drink the waters and grow fruitful by them. The quarries of stone and the trees of the forest supply materials for building houses and ships. And the mines of gold, silver, and other metal, make us rich and honourable, and are useful in many respects.

There is not an herb in the field, nor a tree in the wood, nor a flower in the garden, nor a single blade of grass, but is useful for food, for medicine, or for both.

If we turn our thoughts into the animal creation, we shall find much of GOD every where. The sexes of animals, their generation, their birth, their shape, their life, their instincts, their sympathies and antipathies, conspire so effectually for their own good, and for the use of men, without their own wisdom or contrivance, that it is evident and clear, there is a superior providence, that teacheth the fowls of the air to build their nests in high or hidden places, to
lay

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lay their eggs, to hatch their young, and to feed them when they are hatched :—That there is a superior providence, which formed every creature for its own safety ; arming the lion with teeth and claws, the ox with horns, and the horse with hoofs ; which gave the birds wings to flee away, and swiftness to timorous creatures to make their escape : and, that this providence fits man to govern all things, who serves himself of every creature, and doth himself more especially govern those of his own nature.

In all which we have manifested the truth of those passages in holy writ, where it is written, *whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places.—He bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world,—sendeth rain, and brings the winds out of his treasures.—He ruleth the sea :—At his word the stormy wind ariseth, which lifteth up the waves thereof : and he maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still.—The waters stand in the hills, and drop down to the valleys beneath, unto the place which the Lord has appointed for them. He has set them their bounds, which they shall not pass ; neither turn again to cover the earth.—The earth is full of the riches of the Lord ; it is filled with the fruit of his works. He bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. He brings food out of the earth, and wine, that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart : The high hills he maketh a refuge for the wild goats, and so are the stony rocks for the conies.*

The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to bring forth young. He giveth fodder unto the cattle, and feedeth the young ravens, that call upon him : and the lions roaring after their prey do seek their meat from God : the beasts of the field, the wild asses and the fowls of the air, do all wait upon him, who giveth food to all flesh, that he may give them meat in due season. When the Lord giveth it them, they gather it ; when he opens his hand, they are

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filled with good: when he hides his face they are troubled, when he taketh away their breath, they die, and are turned again to their earth. Not so much as a sparrow can fall to the ground without his permission.

As for man, there is not a hair of his head, but they are all numbered. In GOD we live, we move, and have our being. He bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, and maketh the devices of the people to be of none effect, and casteth out the counsels of princes. O! that men would therefore praise the LORD for his goodness, for his mercy endureth for ever, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men; for his mercy endureth for ever.

Let us recollect some extraordinary acts of providence, and they will serve to confirm this truth, that doubtless there is a GOD that governs the earth. Can any one believe that the Almighty did so many great things for his people in bringing the *Jews* out of *Egypt*; in supporting them forty years in the wilderness, and in their defence in their own land? He cannot put off the belief of a providence, unless he renounceth his reason also. For to say that the plagues of *Egypt* were by chance, or that the safe passage of the *Jews* through the *Red-sea*, and the drowning of the *Egyptian* army was by chance; or that the raining of manna for bread, or quails for meat, or that water for drink was only by a touch of a rod brought out of a hard rock by chance: or that the walls of *Jericho* fell down to make way for the people of GOD to enter, by chance, is as absurd as to say chance is wisdom, and wisdom is chance; or to say every thing is nothing, and nothing is every thing.

Let us also recollect the remarkable completion of the prophecies, and we shall find the providence of GOD very exactly proved. The sojourning of *Abraham* and his descendants in *Egypt* by the providence of GOD, and their exit from thence on the self-same day, that their deliverance was foretold: the laying the

the foundation of *Jericho* in *Abiram*, and the setting up the gates thereof in his youngest son *Segub*, by *Hiel* the *Bethelite*, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by *Joshua* the son of *Nun*: the prophetic punishment of the house of *Eli*, when *Abiathar* was turned out of the priesthood by *Solomon*; and of *Jezebel*, whose flesh was eaten by dogs in the portion of *Jezreel*, according to the word of the LORD: the pollution of the altar at *Bethel*, by *Josiah* burning the bones of the priests thereon, according to the prophetic declaration of king *Josiah*, long before he was born: the release of the *Jews* by *Cyrus* from the seventy years captivity, according to the word of the LORD, spoken by *Jeremiah* the prophet: and all the prophecies accomplished by the advent, birth, life, and sufferings of the *Messiah*, are so many evidences for a divine providence.

Every breath we draw, every action we do, every thing we receive, should convince us, that there is a providence in the world. A providence, that has placed us in our respective stations, has given us an employment in the world; and will enable us to do our duty in that station of life, so that we be diligent and careful what we do. GOD himself, who needs not the world nor any thing in it, is continually at work amongst men: how much more doth it concern us, who have much work upon our hands, to keep ourselves well employed. If we expect providential assistance, we must let no day pass in slothfulness and idleness; no moment find us useless. GOD does not give us the light of the world, and length of days, and the day of grace, for no purpose. Up then and be doing; for the LORD is with us. Let us improve every talent of grace: let us use every moment of time, and let us serve every good end.

Behold the little fly! how many thousand ways does she flutter with her wings? What infinite pains does she take to save her insignificant life? Go to the

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ant! what pains does this very little animal take to preserve a little soul, and to lay up provision for a short life? These diminutive parts of the animal creation instruct us not to rely so upon providence, as to neglect our duty; and that we are not to hope for GOD's blessings except we use our own endeavours, and the means he has prescribed for their attainment.

GOD in a special manner provides for the safety and security of good men. Let us then never step aside from him in quest of any other security; neither let us forsake the way of righteousness to flee and avoid the course of danger. He that forsakes his GOD, to be safe, runs into danger for deliverance; because he flees from the GOD of his salvation. Divine providence pursues sinners, therefore it is madness to do evil to avoid divine justice; and we ought never to do evil that good may come.

There is no security against GOD. He hunts the most cautious sinner in all his secret places: he traceth out his most hidden steps, and finds out all his doublings. He discovers all our shifts; detects all our lies; confutes all our politicks; makes them fools who depend upon their own wisdom; taketh the crafty in their own imaginations, and turns our boasted securities into as many dangers. Let us therefore commit ourselves unto the LORD in well-doing. Let us not sin; no, not for a kingdom. And let us be content that GOD's providence can maintain us without other men's goods, can justify us without a lie, can defend us without injury to our neighbour, and can save us without the help of sin.

T H E P R A Y E R.

ALL thy ways, O LORD! are just and true, and thy works are perfect, so that nothing can be added thereto. O let the sense of thy great majesty and glory so possess and fill our souls, that we may tremble

tremble to offend thee, and stand in awe of thee. Thou hast made a plentiful provision for the wants and necessities of thy creatures. All live upon thy care, O LORD, my GOD, and are richly supported by thy providence. The blessings of heaven and earth are thy free and gracious gifts unto the children of men: for thou alone hast made the heavens by thy great power, and thou guidest the influence of them to the benefit of thy creatures here below: and thou hast laid out the earth upon the waters, and thou makest all the works of thy hands unite for the advantage and happiness of thy servants. Thou protectest them from the evils of nature, from the hurt and violence of their fellow-creatures: thou overrulest the sinfulness of men, and disappointest their designs and counsels as thou plearest; and thy purposes alone are established and stand fast for ever.

Great and marvellous, O LORD! are the works of thy power and of thy goodness! give us grace and wisdom, we beseech thee, to consider thy work, and the operation of thy hands; and so shall we understand the loving kindness of the LORD, which he shewed to mankind, for the sake of his beloved son JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

C H A P. V.

Of the SOUL of Man: Its original RIGHTEOUSNESS and HAPPINESS. In which is included the State of INNOCENCE and the COVENANT of WORKS.

WHEN it is said, that man is created after the *image* of GOD, it is not to be understood, that we look like GOD in our outward appearance, as one man resembles another, but that part of the

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human nature, which we know by the name of the *soul* of man. This is the spirit within us : it subsists by itself, is the living spring of all motion, and resembles the blessed GOD, who is a pure spirit.

The soul is the constituent part of the body, which makes a perfect man, though it is distinct from the body. It performs actions independent on the flesh ; and contrives and effects many affairs, wherein the body is in nowise concerned : no, not so much as an instrument. We think and reason, and will, and resolve by the inner man, without asking the body leave, or being beholden to it, for its assistance. The soul may also be sound, lively, vigorous and healthy, when the body shall be going to decay, rottenness and ruin. The body may be injured, maimed and killed ; but no violence nor power of man can kill or hurt the soul.

Thus the resemblance we bear to GOD our maker, is in the intellectual faculties and the reasonable soul ; that latent spring of action, which escapes the notice of bodily eyes, though it penetrates and pervades the whole body : and that divine principle in us, from whence alone it is, that man is capable of thinking, conceiving and considering of divine heavenly things above us. It is a beam of the eternal sun, so highly descended, as from the ancient of days, which inclines us towards the Father of spirits, as to its blessed centre of rest.

Yet we see men daily employed in finding out the course of the stars, in discovering the nature of plants, the temper of human bodies, and the properties of all other living creatures, without taking the least care to understand the soul, which gives us life. Ah ! such is the almost total neglect of this kind, that most men seem to live, as if they had nothing more than body.

Let not this be our misfortune : for whoever neglects his own soul is no better than a brute, and has
no

no interest with GOD. Look upon a corpse. See how foul, how lothsome and full of horror, and without motion it lies; because it is left by the soul, which gave it life. We can neither grow, nor move any part of the body without the help of the soul. Besides, it is the soul that remembers things past, that forms conjectures of things to come, and that frames discourses, forms ideas, draws inferences, deduceth one thing from another, and gives us a propensity to good, and an aversion to evil. It is also dignified with a liberty to chuse the good and to avoid the evil; as may be particularly collected from the account of the creation.

The works of GOD had no sooner received their being from his omnipotent hand, but they also received the character of being made good. GOD *saw the light, that it was good.* The same is repeated five times, at the formation of other creatures. But when man is made, GOD does not say, that *he was good.*

What can be the reason of this omission of GOD's approbation? Is man less deserving than the brute and inanimate parts of the creation? Shall all other creatures be welcomed into existence with a *blessing*, and is there none for man, who contains the perfections of them all? St. *Ambrose* assigns this reason: because they at their first step into being were made perfect and compleat, as to their substance, without any further dependence upon a *free operation* or *choice*; of which they are not capable. Whereas, man, though he comes, like them, *thus* complete into the world, he cannot be said to be *perfect*; because, his perfection and last accomplishment having a dependence on his own *free will*, he by the *grace* of GOD may be *good*; and by his own *malice* he may become *evil*. So that, notwithstanding man was equally the work of GOD with other creatures, and was created *upright*; yet not having exercised his *liberty* in the *choice* of

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good, the divine approbation was suspended at the first instant of man's creation, till it should appear whether he would make choice of good or evil.

One of the principal duties of a *Christian*, is to esteem all things according to their worth and dignity, giving to each the place due to them, either as to *love* or *hatred*. Now, as you have read, GOD created the *soul*: he formed the *body*, and gave a being to all other things for the service of man; but in such a manner, that all was to be subordinate to the *soul*. Therefore it is the duty of a *Christian*, to see that the soul hold the precedency on all occasions; that he has always a greater esteem for it, than for the body, or any other transient and sublunary thing, and that in time of danger he must *secure* his soul in preferencè to all other considerations. Life, honour, possessions, friends and all must go, rather than to hazard the loss of our soul by saving of these. For, *what can it profit a man, to gain the whole world, if he loseth his own soul?*

The *state of innocence* or primitive integrity, in which man was created, is admirably defined in this apostrophe made by the wisest of men, *Lo! this only have I found, that GOD hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.*

Here we are taught that man was made *upright* (agreeable to the nature of GOD, whose work is perfect) without any imperfection, corruption, or principle of corruption in his body or soul. He was made *upright*, or *straight* with the will and law of GOD, without any irregularity in his soul. GOD made man thus: he did not first *make* him, and then made him righteous: but in the very making of him, he made him righteous. Righteousness was not made *essential* to his nature, but it was *created together* with him: so that in the same moment *Adam* was a *man*, he was a *righteous man*, morally good: with the same breath that GOD breathed into him a living

living soul, he breathed into him also a *righteous* soul.

Our first parents fell off from their rest in God, and set about mending their condition by their own inventions; and presently deformed and ruined themselves by their own proper motion, instead of conforming to the *eternal, indispensable* law of righteousness, to which man, as a rational creature, was subjected in his creation.

Man was required to conform to this law *habitually* with all the powers of his soul; and with all his *actions*, which is called *actual* righteousness: therefore as God had made man *habitually righteous*, man was to make himself *actually righteous*: the former was the talent committed to his care; the latter is the improvement he ought to have made of it.

Thus we collect that the *righteousness*, wherein man was created, was a conformity of all the *faculties* and *powers* of the soul to the *moral law*. For man's understanding was a lamp of light. He had perfect *knowledge of the law*, and of his duty accordingly. He that was made after God's image could not want knowledge; which was necessary also to fit him for *universal obedience*; because no obedience can be according to the law, unless it proceed from a sense of the commandment of God requiring it. Which law was written upon the mind, and impressed upon the soul of the first man; so that the knowledge thereof was created together with him.

His will also laid *straight* with the will of God. There was no corruption in his will; no concupiscence or inclination to evil. The will of man in this state of *uprightness* was directed, and *naturally* inclined to God and to goodness, yet it was *mutably* disposed. It was disposed, by its own original make, to follow the creator's will, as the shadow does the body, and was not left in an *equal* balance to good and evil: because, if so, man could not have been upright,

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upright, nor habitually conform to the law; which in no instance can allow the creature not to be inclined towards GOD, as his chief end, more than it can allow man to be a GOD to himself.

His affections were orderly, pure, and holy, in his primitive state. His *sensitive motions* and inclinations were subordinate to his reason and will. He had also an executive power answerable to his will: a power to do the good, which he knew should be done, and which he inclined to do even to fulfil the whole law of GOD. If it had not been so, GOD would not have required of man a perfect obedience.

We also collect from hence, that man's *original righteousness* was *universal* and *natural*, though *mutable*.—It was *universal*, because it was diffused through the whole man. Man was holy in soul, body and spirit: while the soul remained untainted, its lodging was kept clean and undefiled; the members of the body were consecrated vessels and instruments of righteousness.—It was also *universal*; because there was nothing in the law, but what was agreeable to the reason and will of man, as he came out of the hands of his creator.—It was also *natural* to man, or rather *connatural* to him. He was created with *original righteousness*. It was necessary to the perfection of man, as he came out of the hand of GOD, and necessary to constitute him in a state of integrity; but it was not *essential* to man, as man; because then he could not have lost his righteousness, without the loss of his very being.

Yet it was a *righteousness* that might be lost; of a *mutable* nature. The will of man was not created absolutely indifferent to good and evil: for, GOD set it towards good only, but he did not so fix and confirm its inclinations, that it *could not alter*. No: it was moveable to evil; and that only by man himself. GOD having given him a sufficient power to keep his integrity, if he had pleased.

Thus

Thus, man was made *originally righteous*, being created in GOD's *own image*, which, according to St. Paul, consists in the positive qualities of *knowledge, righteousness and holiness*. All that GOD made was *very good*, according to their several natures. And man was *morally good*, being made after the image of him, who is *good and upright* (*Psal. xxv. 8.*)

Happiness is the consequence of *holiness*: therefore, the first state of man, after his creation, and before he transgressed the law, planted in his soul, was an *happy state*.

Man must have been a ~~very~~ glorious creature, while as yet there was no darkness of sin in him at all. There was no impurity to be seen without, no eyes distorted to squint after any unclean thing: the tongue spoke nothing but the language of heaven; and it might be said of man, as we read in the Psalms, *The king's SON was all glorious within, and his cloathing of wrought gold.*

He was the only *favourite* of heaven; to be crowned with glory and worship. His communion and fellowship was *immediately* with his maker, who admitted him to a confederacy with heaven, in the first covenant, called *the covenant of works*, which required perfect obedience under the promise of *life*, and the penalty of *death*. The law was that man should *believe* whatever GOD should *reveal*; and to *do* whatever he should command. And as a proof of man's obedience, GOD commanded him *not to eat of the tree of knowledge* of good and evil, making this the *rule* of man's covenanted obedience.

For man's obedience to this law GOD promised him *life*; the continuance of *natural life* in the union of his soul and body, and of *spiritual life* in the favour of his creator, and of *eternal life* also in *heaven*, after he had passed the time of his trial upon earth, and the LORD should see proper to transport him into the regions of eternal bliss.

The

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The penalty was *death*, both temporal, spiritual and eternal death. Thus in the day that *Adam* did eat of the *forbidden fruit*, he was a *dead* man in *law*, though the execution was stopped, till another covenant should be prepared, for the sake of his posterity then in his loins. That day, his body received its death wound, and became *mortal*. His soul also was seized by death, and lost its original righteousness, and forfeited the favour of GOD. And he became liable to *eternal death*; for, *the wages of sin is death*, which would have followed the transgression immediately, had not GOD in his mercy provided a *mediator*, who found man bound with the cords of death, as a malefactor ready to be led to execution.

In all this proceeding the Almighty manifested his love to mankind. The first covenant was an act of *grace* and *free favour*. Man in his original state was not at his own, but at GOD's disposal. GOD was free to have disposed of man as he saw meet. Neither had man any thing to work with but what he had received from GOD. Before the covenant man was *bound* to perfect obedience, in virtue of his natural dependence on GOD: and death was naturally the wages of sin; which the justice of GOD could and would have required, though there never had been any covenant betwixt GOD and man. But GOD, on his part, was *free*: man could never have *required* eternal life, as the reward of his works, if there had not been such a covenant. Though man had stood in his integrity, as long as the world had been destined to stand, and there had been no *covenant* promising eternal life to him for his obedience, GOD might justly have withdrawn his supporting hand at last, and made him rest in the womb of nothing, from whence almighty power had drawn him out. But the covenant being graciously made, GOD becomes debtor to his own *faithfulness*: so that man became intitled to a reward of promise, on the faith

of the covenant. Thus from the beginning man had no claim upon GOD, in his own right; but is indebted to the divine *grace* and *free favour* for every blessing he receives.

GOD did not only enter into covenant with his creature man; but he made him *Lord of the sublunary world*, prince over the inferior parts of the creation, and universal lord of the whole earth; gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth on the earth; to dispose of, and to use them for wise and good purposes. All creatures came before him, received names from him, and acknowledged their subjection; and tamely and quietly payed homage to him, as their lord and ruler. The LORD kept nothing from him, but the tree of knowledge; which was to be a test of man's obedience to GOD's sovereign dominion: that while he saw himself lord of the creation, he might not forget, that he himself was GOD's subject. This tree was also a memento of his mutable state, to guard him against the inticements of sin; and to teach him that his happiness did not consist in the enjoyment of the creatures, but that he was to look to GOD for happiness.

In these circumstances man enjoyed a perfect tranquillity within his own breast; so that he had a perfect calm without. His heart had nothing to reproach him with: conscience had nothing to do, but to direct, approve and feast him; and without nothing could annoy him. The happy pair lived in perfect love: their knowledge was extensive, clear and true; yet they knew no *shame*, which entered into the world with sin. They were naked; yet were in no need of clothes to cover them from shame or the inclemency of the air. They were liable to no diseases nor pains; and though they were not created to live in idleness, yet toil, weariness and sweat of the brows were not known in this state.

Man

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Man in this state of innocence did not only enjoy all the power, honour, blessings and pleasures, which his nature was capable of, and the earth could afford in the garden of Eden, which produced every thing for necessity, convenience and delight; for therein was every tree that is pleasant to the sight and for food: but he was made immortal. He would never have died, had he not sinned. Death is the consequence of sin, and not of a sinless human nature. The testimony of the apostle is express: *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.*

From the premises we collect, that GOD made man upright, and that man was the cause of his own ruin: that GOD may justly require of man perfect obedience to his law; and condemn them for not keeping it perfectly, because he gave man ability to keep the whole law, and that ability is lost by man's own fault; which fault could never take away GOD's right to exact perfect obedience, but exposes man to punishment for his disobedience: and that our help in this state of sin is in JESUS CHRIST, the second Adam, who has bought us with the price of his own blood, and purchased for us a state of salvation, with this additional security, that we shall never perish, nor be plucked out of GOD's hand any more (*John x. 28.*) Thus free grace will save those whom *free will* made miserable.

In this account, we have a reproof for those, who hate religion in the power of it, and can take pleasure in nothing, but in the world, and their lusts. These are, as the apostle calls them, *haters of GOD*, for as much as they hate holiness, the image of GOD in man. Another reproof for such as put religion to shame, and those, who are ashamed of religion before a wicked world: who secretly approve of religion, and will behave like Christians in religious company; yet, when linked in with the fools, who say there is no GOD, or with men, who make a mock of sin, and

and ridicule religion with an impious jest, a profane gibe, or a broad laugh; will yield to the counsel of the ungodly, sit in the seat of the scornful, and walk in the way of sinners; be ashamed to own their religion, rather than seem to dissent from their neighbours. They would do well to consider this scripture seriously, where CHRIST declares, that, *whoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.* And here is a reproof for those, who are not content with such knowledge as GOD has been pleased to bestow upon them; but strive to be wise above what is revealed, and wrest the scriptures to their own destruction.

Again, who can look back to the state of innocence, and not bewail the *ruins* of that once stately building, man? Then there was no stain in our nature, no clouds in our minds, no pollution in our hearts, no rebellion in our will, no discord in our affections. But ah! *how are the mighty fallen? How is the faithful city become an harlot?* The heart, which once was the temple of GOD is now become a den of thieves. *The crown is fallen from our heads: wo unto us that we have sinned;* for we are plunged into a gulph of misery. Yet there is hope concerning this thing: for, thanks be to GOD, *which giveth us the victory over sin by our Lord JESUS CHRIST;* if we quit the first *Adam* and his covenant, and place our trust on JESUS CHRIST the mediator and surety of the new and a better covenant, we shall be renewed in holiness, and enabled to recover that happiness, for which we were created.

THE PRAYER.

O Almighty creator, who hast given me a soul, of greater value than all the world, give me also wisdom and grace to esteem and regard it, as I ought; that I may never neglect it, nor prefer my vile

vile body before it: but that I may always act according to the dictates of a good conscience, taking the greatest care, and making the best provision for my soul with the assistance of thy grace. And though I am conceived in iniquity and sin, and thou in justice may impute unto me the guilt and rebellion of my first parents, whose original corruption overspreads me, and shews its sad effects in every part and faculty of me, I am not without hope, that there is a door open for me to recover thy favour, and that, O GOD of all grace, thou wilt repair in me what I have lost in *Adam*, by the righteousness of thy beloved Son, my blessed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

C H A P. VI.

Of the FALL of MAN into a State of SIN and DEATH; and herein of ORIGINAL SIN, and the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration.

WE are now to take a view of man fallen into a *state of sin and death*, which is called his second state, and is as different from the first as death is from life; sin from innocence, darkness from light, misery from happiness.

In the fall of man we have three agents, namely GOD, *satan*, and *man*. In this tragedy GOD acteth a part; but in a different manner from that we have given to him in the creation of man: for the good state of man was properly, directly, immediately and wholly wrought by GOD: but he did only *suffer* the evil state to be brought to pass by evil instruments.

Yet, we are not to suppose GOD was an idle looker on, as if he had cast off the care of the world and his creatures, and left all to chance: for he had in

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his eternal counsel made an immutable decree of this fall of man, and the means thereof; and that for the setting forth of his glory, which is the end of all his decrees and actions whatsoever.

That GOD is greatly glorified by this means is manifest; because hereby it appeareth, that GOD only is constant, eternal, and the same for ever; his most excellent creatures being so variable. Hence says the apostle: *Let GOD be true, and every man be a liar, as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*—It also sheweth that GOD is *just* in punishing sin.—And it made way for the state of salvation, the greatest proof of the mercy of GOD; the attribute whereby he is most of all glorified. Besides, in this conduct of the deity, we have evident testimonies of the power, wisdom, truth, patience, and of the whole glory of GOD.

Satan and man were the instruments, whereby GOD brought his eternal counsel to pass. GOD had no hand or dealing in this matter of the fall; he only permitted them to do what they list. GOD neither commanded nor advised it; but he carefully forewarned our first parents of the fall. Moreover, he neither put any evil motion in their minds, nor withdrew from them any natural grace, whereby they should have been supported; but left it to their *free choice*, whether they would be clean and obey his law, or rebel against his command. And here let it be observed, that, as the fall of man came to pass by his own *free will*, the creature was not compelled to sin, through the necessity of GOD's decree; and that this divine decree did not take away, but establish man's free will.

Man having by sin separated himself from GOD, lost that conjunction of perfect holiness and happiness, which he had with him, and was cast out from the presence of GOD, and out of paradise. His body, which

which before was beautiful and majestic, became deformed and contemptible. Instead of continual health, he became subject to infinite diseases, infirmities, sicknesses and sores. His happiness was exposed to as many dangers and accidents, as there were things in the world; for there is nothing, but may become mortal to him by some means or other. And his immortality is superceded by death. For the babe often dies before he is born to live. Great numbers are cut off by death in the flower of their age: and they that live many years are seldom free from labour and sorrow: their years are full of misery.

If we view the state of the soul, we shall find the understanding, which was once as clear as the sun in the meridian, overshadowed and choaked up with palpable darkness, gross errors, stupid ignorance, and perplexed with an uneasy conscience. His will is become perverse, abhorring whatever is good, and cleaving to that which is evil. His affections are raging, and degenerate into inordinate lusts: and there can be nothing found in the whole nature of man but horrible confusion.

Thus the whole man is fallen into a state of perdition. An angel is placed with a sword to keep him out of paradise. He can no longer boast of his absolute power over all creatures; many of them being ready to tear him in pieces. His affections are for the most part fixed on the produce of this world: and the miseries of this life are but the beginning of those unspeakable miseries, which have no end, but continue for ever. For, all the sorrows, pains, and miseries of this life, and death itself, are but an entrance to that eternal misery, which is prepared for sinners. The greatness of which misery consists in that intolerable grief for the loss, or that happiness enjoyed by the faithful, and in suffering those pains which the world undergoeth in utter darkness, and

in the lowest pit, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is as unquenchable as the anger of God, which in the day of wrath shall be poured upon the wicked.

All this may be easily conceived and understood: but it is with some difficulty presumptuous man can be prevailed upon to acknowledge the loss of that inherent purity, which his nature was blessed with before *Adam's* transgression. A loss that must not be attributed to God, whose gifts are without repentance, and whose nature is far from any such inconstancy; but to man, and to him only, who made a total apostacy from God, though not with a wilful intention to renounce God and all holiness; but under the influence of satan, and through the nature of sin; which like leaven, soureth the whole lump, be it ever so big, where it once gets admision. *Adam* might think that the eating the forbidden fruit was but a single and small offence, but the tempter knew that it would prove an universal apostacy from God; that it would deprive both him and his posterity of that light of mind, of the actual inclination of his will to do good only, and of whatsoever else was good in him; because, that man, having once inclined his will to disobey his maker, and admitted the leaven of unbelief into his mind, he could not preserve his affections and actions from the contagion of sin. Thus while the sweetness of the fruit was yet in the mouth of *Adam*, its venom pierced into the most inmost parts of his soul, leaving no part free from the corruption of sin. His mind being darkened by the delusion of the devil, so that he thought evil to be good, and the way to extreme misery to be the only way to the greatest happiness; it could not be, but that his will, affections and actions, and all the faculties both of body and soul should be corrupted; because a corrupt mind bringeth forth a perverse will, and a sinful will produceth inordinate affections.

fections. Hence the mind is darkened, and all the outward actions are defiled.

Therefore *Adam* lost the purity of his nature by continuing in the sin into which he had fallen; and by adding one measure of sinfulness to another, till he arrived at a constant habit and natural disposition of sinfulness. And, as he was himself sinful, so he left his sinfulness to all his posterity: so that every one descended from his loins may say with great propriety, *I am fashioned in sin, and in iniquity did my mother conceive me.*

This ORIGINAL SIN or corruption, is emphatically named *the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*, Eph. iv. 22. where we learn, that it is the nature of this sin to influence and pollute the actions and faculties of the soul and body in such a manner, that almost nothing at all is seen in a man thus corrupted, but sin; his manly vigour and virtue being utterly indisposed for a spiritual life and practice, till it be rescued and restored by the powerful grace of God.

The apostle calls *original sin*, a *man*; not as if it were a creature *after God's own image and likeness*; but as he appeared after the corruption of mankind, when the LORD looking down from heaven upon the *children of men*, to see, if there were any, that would understand and seek after God, declared that *they were all gone aside, and were altogether become filthy*: so that *there was not one that doth good, no not one.*

Mankind being thus corrupted by *original sin* and the infection of *Adam* derived on all his unhappy posterity, every man corrupts himself more and more by *actual sin*. The longer he lives, and the more he acts, the more he increaseth that original stock of sin conveyed to him by the first transgression. Wherever such a man moves, he acts in his own corrupt sphere. Even in his very prayers, and other religious acts, which one might think should raise him *above himself*,

himself, and the common level of natural depravation, he is not able to rise above his own corrupt centre. Though he seems to move out of it, it is but by fits and starts; and in all such specious performances, he is like a *spider*, which indeed in moving up and down spins a web, but out of its own bowels; being, notwithstanding its busy and restless activity, fastened by a continued thread to its own earthly principle.

Thus the *natural man* in the best of his actions, never leaves nor forsakes himself. He may kneel, prostrate himself, look up to heaven, knock his breast, sigh, groan, and perform his prayers, and other devotional acts with much affectation, strictness and severity; yet all this may be no more than so many hypocritical, customary and counterfeit acts of worship. He sings and prays in the old man. His charity may be the work of the old man; who in the midst of lifeless formalities maintains his ground, and flatters the soul into a confident belief of her being in a good state. Thus men are taken captives at the *devil's will*, (2 Tim. ii. 26.) and which is worse, they do not feel their captivity.

O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin! is an apostrophe, that becometh every tongue, which is made sensible of the nature of original sin. It is not human wit and reason, nor our natural parts and abilities, that can deliver us from, or guard us against the ensnaring power and artifices of sin. For, the light a natural man pretends to, will never carry him to the *root* of sin and corruption. All the corruptions of the heart lye undisturbed and undiscerned till the law comes: *for when the commandment comes, sin revives*. Which shews the eminent use of the dispensation of the law in the work of conversion. This alone discovers sin in its own native corruption; making thereby a beginning towards a saving change of the soul, and convincing us, at

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the same time, how greatly our discerning faculty is impaired in religious duties. So, though men are enslaved by sin, they do not discover it, till the law comes and *revives* sin.

They, who would conquer this sin, must *put off the old man*; they must put him off entirely, not only in the mortification of *the deeds of the flesh*, gross vices and notorious corruptions; but also the more interior defilements of the *heart, will, reason, thoughts* and *imagination*.

This is, or ought to be the daily and uninterrupted task of a *Christian*. For, we cannot put off the old man at once. It is a work of time: because we shall daily discover him in his deceitful lusts, affections, and corruptions. How many, then, deceive themselves in their notion about *putting off the old man*. The sober man may think he has put him off, when he has got quit of some *gross* sin, and embraced another more *refined*: or broke himself of a notorious custom of drunkenness, &c. and contracted some inward defilements in thought and desire. But sobriety is not taught by *nature*, but by *grace*: and therefore the sober man can never *put off the old man*, except he *deny ungodliness* and lothe *worldly deeds and lusts*.

This sin is called an *indwelling* sin (*Rom. vii. 17, 20.*) because it never quits its usual habitation. We may hate and mortify the deeds of the flesh: but we are not able entirely to destroy the first cause, from whence they proceed. This is the sin which doth *so easily beset us*, and is known by the name of *the law of sin*; because it revives and stirs up all other sins, and influenceth them with its evil motions and commands. It is likewise called *the body of sin*; because it is branched out into abundance of earthly members, and cloged with a multitude of unfruitful works of darkness; supplying all the members with vicious inclinations, and keeping a plentiful stock within. It is called *the flesh* *lusting against the spirit*. It is the
fountain

fountain head conveying poison to all the streams, that issue from it. It is the *seed of corruption*, which is found in every child of *Adam*. And it is a *spiritual leprosy* handed down by an hereditary infectious generation in human nature.

It is called *original sin*, because it is the spring of all disorders overflowing the world, and of the judgments of God provoked by them. Alas! such is the miserable state of man: if an infinite restorer does not rescue us from it, we must at last sink into the gulph of eternal misery, and lose all the very least impression of the divine life and goodness.

This *original corruption* hath not only debauched all the faculties of the soul, but all the actions of all the faculties. What good can descend from so vitiated an original? *Who can bring a clean thing from an unclean? A corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.* Here Jesus declares it to be an utter impossibility to do any thing really good; and all human endeavours are silenced before the spiritual tribunal of this impartial judge. Because those endeavours are not moved, influenced and enlivened by that *heavenly principle*, which is necessary for a right performance of spiritual duties. Whatever man does well, it is a work of *grace*, and not of *nature*.

Hence also we learn the necessity of *regeneration*; that thereby a new bent and bias may be put into the soul, to overcome, at last, that earthly bent wherewith the soul is tied down to sin and corruption. Which *regeneration* is not a handful of moral civilities; nor a set of fine ceremonies; nor the strictness of the *Pharisee*; nor the severities of the heathen; nor the fair dealing of an honest man; nor the observance of a form of religion set up by human authority; nor a zealous defence of some party-opinions; nor the learning and wisdom of a great scholar; nor yet a fit of devotion raised by reasoning on

the terrors of the law, or by approaching judgments. Alas! all these things fall infinitely short of that *regeneration*, which is the *new birth*, enjoyed by the LORD to all those, who will enter into the kingdom of GOD.

Hence we are taught the nature and necessity of regeneration. It is not a partial, but a total change, though imperfect in this life. Our whole nature is corrupted: therefore the cure must go through every part. Regeneration makes not only a new head for knowledge, but a new heart and new affections for holiness. *All things become new.* And this change is not to be made by any human means; but by the mighty power of the spirit of GOD. A man must be *born of the spirit*, John iii. 5. For, as nature is corrupt, none but the GOD of nature can change it.

The necessity of regeneration also appears in this scripture; *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD*, unless at a distance, as the rich man in the gospel saw it from hell. No unclean thing can enter heaven: but we are wholly unclean in a natural state.

THE PRAYER.

ALmighty GOD, and most merciful Father! it is thy infinite mercy, that fills me with a desire to love thee. It is thy divine light, that opens a way for me to see my own darkness: and it is thy heavenly call, which has awakened me into a sense of my corrupt state and helpless condition. By thy light, I have discovered the depravity and perverseness of my will, the blindness of my understanding, the rebellion of my passions, the defilement of my imagination, the pollution of my memory, the vanity of my reason, the iniquity of my members, and the conformity of my whole body to the course of this world. Grant, therefore, gracious LORD! that
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the work of my conversion, which is so happily begun, may by thy grace be carried on to the salvation of my soul.

Alas ! how far hath original sin degraded me from that original integrity, which is required by thy law, and which was by the grace of creation conveyed to me. Thy law is holy and just ; but my nature is unholy and carnal. Thy law is pure and right, but my nature is degenerate and crooked. Thy law is quick and lively, but my nature dead in trespasses and sin, and become an abomination in thy sight. Let, therefore, the ministration of the law work in me a true brokenness of heart by the knowledge of sin : and then let the ministration of the gospel revive me by the promise of grace ; that the still-voice of thy grace, O Father ! may restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and make me a sacrifice of righteousness on the altar of thy love, through the merits, and for the sake of thy son JESUS CHRIST my Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

C H A P. VII.

*Of the WEAKNESS of human Nature, or
Man's INABILITY to recover himself, and
of the Necessity of a SAVIOUR.*

TO the other miseries entailed upon mankind by the fall, we must add his *utter inability to recover himself*. For, as there is no way for an unconverted man to help himself out of that state, but either in the way of the law or covenant of works, by doing all himself without CHRIST ; or else in the way of the gospel, or covenant of grace, by exerting his own strength to lay hold upon, and to make use of the help offered him by a Saviour, he is not able to re-

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cover himself by those means from the abyss of sin, wherein he is buried. Because we were *without strength* (Rom. v. 6.) till CHRIST *died for the ungodly*; and, though CHRIST is come and offereth help to sinners, we cannot partake of that help, or we cannot *come unto CHRIST*, (i. e. believe in him) *except the Father draw us by hearing and learning of the Father*, John vi. 25, 35.

The sinner by *working* can never recover himself. Let us work and do our best, we shall never be able to work ourselves out of the state of corruption and wrath. We must be in CHRIST and CHRIST in us, or we perish everlastingly.

He that pleads for the efficacy of works according to the law, would do well to consider this scripture: *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*. For, here is required perfect obedience; which can never be found in a soul, that is unregenerate, because the principle of action must be perfectly pure and altogether without sin. Besides, this obedience must be as extensive as the whole law; he is denounced accursed who continueth not in *every thing* written in the law. A vain thought, or an idle word will shut one up under this curse. This obedience also must be perfect in *degrees*; as the obedience of *Adam*, during his state of innocence. We must *love God with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our strength*. The least defect in any one degree of that love is a breach of the law, and leaves us under the curse; and we are entirely ruined unless we take hold of CHRIST, and renounce all our righteousness as filthy rags. Moreover, this obedience must be *perpetual*. *Cursed is he that CONTINUETH not in all things written in the law to do them*. Hence, though *Adam's* obedience was for a while absolutely perfect; yet at length by eating the forbidden fruit, he fell under the curse of the law. So that, notwithstanding a man should live in perfect obedience to the law of God, all the days

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days of his life, and only at the hour of death entertain a vain thought, or pronounce an idle word, it would deprive him of salvation by the works of the law. *No man cometh to the Father, but by the son: neither is there salvation in any other.* He only can satisfy the divine justice; and he is the propitiation for our sins.

What then are we doing, while we presumptuously strive to help ourselves, and to pay the debt contracted by sin, without receiving and uniting with JESUS CHRIST? A flaming sword of justice keeps us off from the tree of life. The law denounceth a curse on us for all we are doing. If we live and die *out of* CHRIST, without being actually *united* to him, as the second *Adam*, a life-giving spirit, and without coming under the covert of his atoning blood; though we should do the utmost any man on earth can do, in keeping the commandments of GOD, we can never see the face of GOD in peace. Thus it is certain, man is unable to recover himself by the way of *works*, or of the *law*.

Let us now see how far man is capable of improving the help offered by CHRIST, and of recovering himself in the way of the gospel. *Without faith it is impossible to please GOD.* Salvation is offered to them that will believe in CHRIST: but how can we believe. Saving faith is not attainable by our own strength and power. It is the special gift of GOD, wrought in us by his spirit. Salvation is offered to them, that will come to CHRIST: but *no man can come unto him, except the Father draw him.* It is offered to them that look towards him; but the natural man is spiritually blind; so that he cannot see nor know the things of GOD, because they are spiritually discerned. How can one believe and repent, whose understanding is *darkness*; whose heart is *stone*, inflexible, insensible; whose affections are wholly disordered and distempered; who is averse to good and bent to evil?

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Believing, repenting, and the like, are the produce of the new nature : they can never be produced by the old corrupt nature : therefore man cannot work a change in himself. He must be regenerate, *begotten again unto a lively hope* : in which regeneration man is passive only. Nothing can open a heart that is shut against CHRIST, but the grace of GOD. None can quicken the man that is dead in sin, and raise him out of the grave of corruption, but GOD himself. Moreover, before we can profit in the way of the gospel, we must be *created* in CHRIST JESUS *unto good works*, Eph. ii. 10. which requires an omnipotent agent to perform.

The man, that is under an utter inability to do any thing truly good, can never obey the gospel, so long as he remains in that depraved state. The corruption of man's nature infallibly concludes his incapacity to recover himself in any manner of way. He cannot command one good thought ; *we are not sufficient of ourselves to THINK any thing, as of ourselves : our sufficiency is of GOD*. He cannot be sure of uttering a good word. *How can ye*, says CHRIST, *being evil, SPEAK good things*. In a word, *we can do nothing without CHRIST*, John xv. 5.

Let us then admire the freedom and power of grace, which comes to us in our helpless condition, makes our bonds of slavery to fall off, and brings us out of the state of sin and wrath. Let the natural man be sensible, that there is no help for him in his own strength, and that there is no coming to CHRIST, till he be drawn : and let every mouth confess that there is an absolute need of CHRIST, and of his overcoming grace ; for it is he that giveth us the victory over sin and death.

Being thus satisfied, that human nature could never recover its lost state by any endeavours of its own : it follows, that, to satisfy GOD's justice and to repair man's nature, without which there could be no reconciliation with heaven, it was necessary to find

find out a middle and common person, who by having man's guilt and punishment translated on him, might satisfy the justice of GOD; and by having a plenitude of GOD's spirit and holiness in himself, might be able to sanctify and repair the nature of man. Which person could be no other but the *son of GOD*; who by his Father's appointment, his own voluntary offering, and the Holy Ghost's sanctification, was fitted for the business.

Thus a covenant being made between GOD and CHRIST, that all who should believe in CHRIST should not perish, but have everlasting life, upon condition, that CHRIST should in his own person pay the debt due from man to his maker, that he should take upon him the form of man, and his name; that he should obey the Father in man's stead; do all for man that GOD should require, and, by suffering in the flesh the punishment, which man had deserved, should satisfy the just judgment of GOD, under the penalty that lay upon man to have undergone; justice was satisfied and mercy was magnified. GOD of his free grace accepted of this payment and satisfaction. And the Lord JESUS CHRIST entered into the same covenant of works, that *Adam* had broken, to restore his race to the favour of the almighty.

Wherefore CHRIST, our Redeemer, is called the *second Adam* and *Lord from heaven*; who has all the elect included in him, who are the *first-born* in GOD's favour, and have their *names written in heaven*; even as *all the sons of men* born into the world are included in *Adam*, the *first earthly man*.

Thus the LORD willing to shew mercy to sinful man, and yet to maintain the authority of his law, took such a course as might best manifest his clemency and severity. CHRIST entered into covenant and became surety for man, and thereby became, answerable for man's engagements; without which there could have been no salvation.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who knowest that I have no power of myself to help myself, keep me both outwardly in my body, and inwardly in my soul, that I may be defended from all adversity which may happen to my body, and from all evil thoughts, which may assault and hurt the soul. And because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep me ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation; so that being regenerate, and made thy child by adoption and grace, I may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through our Lord JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

C H A P. • VIII.

Of the Promise of Redemption by JESUS CHRIST. And of Salvation by Faith alone, and not by the Works of the Law.

MAN, by his sin, being become the child of wrath, and both in body and soul subject to the curse and the vengeance of his almighty creator, was afraid, and sought to hide himself from the presence of God. But GOD searched him out, called unto him, reproved him for his crime; and then mercifully promised to give his only begotten son to restore mankind to his favour, and to a state of salvation; in these words, saying unto the serpent, which had caused Eve to sin, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. He (the seed of the woman) shall break thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

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This was the first gospel, or good tidings of salvation. GOD called our Lord JESUS CHRIST the *seed* of the woman, to signify that his son should take upon him a real human body; and that, as the serpent had wrought the destruction of man by seducing the woman, even so he would work salvation to mankind by the woman. For, of a woman shall a seed or child be born, which shall break the head, power and kingdom of satan, and conquer sin, damnation and death. All which confirms, that we are made whole and cleansed from sin, and delivered from the curse, the devil, and everlasting damnation, only through the mercy and grace of GOD by JESUS CHRIST.

The *head* of the serpent signifies the power and dominion of the devil, which he acquired by the fall of man. By the *heel*, we are to understand the flesh of CHRIST, which the old serpent bruised and persecuted by the *Jews*, the chief priests, and by *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*. CHRIST suffered for us in the flesh, having become partaker of *our flesh and blood*, that through death he might destroy him, that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage: for, he took not upon him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham—to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

By this *treading down* of the LORD, GOD hath trodden down the kingdom of *satan*: or, by his death CHRIST has destroyed death, and given life to as many as believe in him. Wherefore, CHRIST saith, *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out: and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, i. e. crucified, will draw all men unto me.*

The enmity on this occasion, put between the serpent and the seed of the woman, is an express command for man, never to give place to the devil, but to renounce and to resist him. If we hope to partake

of the mercy of GOD in the redemption of mankind, we must hold no communication or commerce with the devil. All which is verified in the lives of those, whom GOD hath drawn to Christ; they tread down the devil under their feet: whereas they, who are dead in trespasses and sins, *walking after their own ungodly lusts, who being sensual, separate themselves from the love of GOD, having not the spirit*, Jude 18, 19.

Adam was so sensible of the mercy of GOD, and so thoroughly believed in the promise, that he and his posterity, then the children of wrath, of the devil and of death, should live through the blessed seed, that he changed the name of his mate from that of *woman*, (i. e. taken out of the man) to the name of *Eve*, which signifies *life*; in remembrance of this happy event, and for a memorial of his faith. For, he believed that his wife now living in the power of the blessed seed, should bring forth perfect men, as touching the flesh; but children that should live unto GOD through JESUS CHRIST. And from all this it is evident, that *Eve* had the same faith with her husband, that neither they, nor any of their posterity could be saved by any work or merit of their own, but only through and in the blessed seed, which is our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

This is the faith, our first parents taught their immediate offspring, that they might give them a true sense of the promises of GOD; of his mercy, and of his intention concerning the Messiah or Saviour, that was to come. A supposition warranted by the faith of their son *Abel*; of whom St. Paul makes this remark: *By faith Abel offered unto GOD a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, GOD testifying of his gifts.* But as there could be no righteousness except through the blessed seed, it followeth that *Abel* was made righteous through faith in JESUS CHRIST; in whose merits he trusted, and not in any outward sacrifice,

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which cannot purify the inward man, though it be acceptable to GOD, as a token and fruit of a heart that is thankful unto, and feareth GOD; and also as a type of that sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction once offered for all men by our Saviour CHRIST. And as such, this sacrifice by *Abel*, as well as those, which were offered by the faithful, until CHRIST was crucified for the sins of the whole world, may be accounted *sacraments* of things to come.

But before we pursue that subject, it behoves us to turn our thoughts towards the cause of the different effects, which attended the offering of *Abel* and that of his brother *Cain*; for herein we shall discover an original draught of a carnal, and of a spiritual man; of one that depended upon his own works, and of one, that depended upon the promises and grace of GOD.

In *Abel* is an example of GOD's seed; and of a regenerate true faithful christian. In *Cain* is found the seed of the serpent, a child of the devil, which despiseth the inspiration of GOD, and hearkeneth to the deceitful serpent. In which comparison we shall discover the meaning of that enmity, which GOD placed between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent. By which is signified, that there shall be two manner of people, one of whom shall cleave unto CHRIST the blessed seed; the other shall cleave unto the devil; whose generations shall always be at variance in faith and religion. As if GOD had said, I will bless my seed, that they shall cleave only unto me; fear me, honour and worship me, and intercede for my favour through the blessed seed, living a virtuous, sober and honest life. But the serpent will tempt their seed with all subtilty and deceit, to make their children not to love me, nor to serve me, as they ought to do; nor to seek me in the ways of my commandments; nor to trust in me; but

but to love the world and the flesh, and to follow their lusts and temptations.

Behold ! we find all this in the two first brethren we read of in sacred history. In them we have the difference between true and false believers. *Abel* was simple, godly and firm in faith towards GOD ; for by bringing the best of his substance to offer unto the Lord, he expressed a most lively sense of his love for, and dependance on him ; and of his entire resignation to the divine will. He also followed that which was good ; gave no way to temptations, and lived an innocent, virtuous and friendly life. Wherefore the LORD was pleased with his sacrifice.

On the contrary, in *Cain* we find the image of the unregenerate man. His heart was not towards his maker. He dissembled with the almighty, and his own soul : he set his heart on the things of this world ; grudged to give GOD his due ; despised GOD's promise, and followed the imaginations and devices of his own carnal heart, which are evil continually : therefore his sacrifice did not please GOD.

Thus, in these two brethren is set forth the whole contention and strife, which the world, the city of the devil ; the children and citizens of the cursed city, (wherein the serpent beareth rule,) shall make against the city and citizens, wherein, and over whom CHRIST is the head, and reigneth unto the end of the world. The freemen of the city of GOD and of CHRIST, cleave only unto GOD ; serve him with all their heart, and build their hopes only upon CHRIST. The citizens of the serpent despise GOD, yet make an outward profession of him : they call themselves after his name ; make offerings unto him, pray unto him, and worship him with their lips, and by the positive institutions of religion ; but are far from him in their hearts : neither do they their acts of devotion, as they ought to do ; and when they perceive that
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their faith is not right; that it wants the enlivening grace of GOD, and that GOD hath searched out their iniquity, and is disgusted at their hypocrisy and sin, then they break out into open defiance of their maker, and work all iniquity with greediness. Thus *Cain*, enraged at the acceptance which *Abel's* sacrifice found before GOD, went out and slew his brother; and when GOD would afterwards have reclaimed him, endeavoured to bring him to a just sense of his sin, and would have pardoned him: but he would not hearken to the voice of the LORD, but wrangled and turned away from his face and mercy. For which the LORD was wroth, and cursed him.

This ended in despair. For, being persuaded by the seed of the serpent, which lurked in his heart, that GOD had forsaken him, *Cain* grew more wicked, dealt altogether ungodly, fixed his mind on the means to make himself great upon earth, and endeavoured presumptuously to defend himself from the punishment of the curse of GOD, by building and fortifying himself in a city.

Cain having thus forfeited his title to universal redemption through the promised seed, and killed *Abel* his righteous brother, *Adam* was blessed with another child, whom he called *Seth*, or *the Plant*; because he believed that GOD had set and planted him as a branch, out of which, in *Abel's* stead, the *Messiah* or Saviour should be born.

From *Seth* proceeded the generation of the righteous. He taught his children to put their belief and trust in GOD; to comfort themselves in the blessed seed, and to seek for salvation through the promised Messiah. For, in the days of his son *Enos*, men began to call on the name of the Lord. Thus from the righteous *Seth* sprang the faithful servants of GOD until *Noah*, in whose days the cursed race of *Cain* and of the ungodly was destroyed and drowned by the flood.

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In the line of *Seth* we read of *Enoch*, who is distinguished for his faith in the promise, where it is said he *walked with GOD*, or ordered his life and conversation altogether after the will of GOD; according to what had been revealed unto *Adam*: for which it is particularly recorded in scripture, that GOD *took him*; whereby *Enoch* became an example of the immortality of the soul, and of the resurrection of the body; and that all GOD's servants shall after this life enjoy eternal glory.

However, the ungodly issue of the serpent's seed increased in number, more than the righteous, who took to themselves wives and husbands from among themselves, and begat a generation of people without faith, without the knowledge and fear of GOD; and who lived after their own lusts, though the LORD gave them a warning of one hundred and twenty years for their repentance. This drew upon them the wrath and justice of the Almighty upon the unbelieving world. They forgot GOD utterly; and GOD destroyed them all by a flood; that all posterity unto the end of time might have a terrible example of his power to punish such as despise his mercy, and provoke his wrath.

The generation of the ungodly and unrighteous being thus destroyed by the power of GOD, faithful *Noe* was saved in the ark through the grace and mercy of GOD; because he believed in CHRIST. And with him the LORD renewed the covenant he had made with *Adam*, and gave unto him certain laws relating to marriage, and the education of children in the fear of GOD: to eating of blood, which is a figurative expression commanding that no man shall murder, oppress, extort, bear false witness, defraud, or deceive: and enjoining the love of GOD and of our neighbour.

Noe believed the LORD, and was saved by that belief in CHRIST, or the blessed seed, promised to
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bruise the serpent's head. But he was unhappy in his children. From some of them idolatry, offering to images, and to animals, to the host of heaven, &c. human sacrifices, and false religion overspread the greatest part of the earth. Even his son *Shem*, of whose stock was born *Abraham*, was corrupted in the faith, by which *Noe* and his family had been saved; and yielded to the iniquity of the times.

Here GOD's love towards mankind manifested itself in a most eminent degree; no less than in the promise to *Adam*. He called *Abraham* out from the idolatry, which had darkened the sincere faith in *Chaldea*, and renewed with him the covenant made with our first parents, or rather turned that promise into a covenant with *Abraham* and his seed. *Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee*, said the LORD: *and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a GOD unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And in thy seed shall all the generations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.* Which seed *St. Paul* declares to the *Galatians*, was *CHRIST*. So that the promise made to *Adam*, to *Noe* and to *Abraham*, was one promise, one Saviour, one *CHRIST*, one faith. Wherefore it is written, that *Abraham* believed also in *JESUS CHRIST* and was saved, having through faith seen the day of *CHRIST*'s manifestation to the world, and rejoiced; because *CHRIST* is the true joy of a troubled conscience.

Abraham is thence called the father of the faithful. And if we believe and do, as *Abraham* did, then are we *Abraham*'s children, and shall rest in his bosom, even with him in the kingdom of GOD. *If ye be CHRIST's*, says *St. Paul*, *then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

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In which vocation of *Abraham* we are to observe, that the promise of GOD's blessing through CHRIST, was not confined to any particular people or nation: but that, they, of every nation and language upon the face of the earth, *who are of faith*, or who inherit his belief, should be *Abraham's children*, and *blessed with faithful Abraham*. Which promise or covenant was the very voice itself of the gospel, it being a true testimony of JESUS CHRIST, as the same apostle witnesseth in this remarkable passage. *The scripture foreseeing, that GOD would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying in thy seed shall ALL nations of the earth be blessed.*

This being established, there remains no difficulty to ascertain the faith of *Abraham's* posterity. *Jacob's* ladder was a singular type of CHRIST, where that patriarch was convinced that CHRIST was the only way to lead him to heaven. And his memorable prophecy, just before his death, concerning *Shiloh* or the Saviour, to be born of the stock of *Judah*, very clearly pointed out the time of the birth of JESUS CHRIST.

After the death of the patriarchs, though the *Israelites* leaned too much to the idolatrous worship of the *Egyptians*, there remained many devout and faithful men amongst them, who served the LORD according to the covenant made with *Abraham*. For, the parents of *Moses*, when he was born, hid him by *faith* three months; *because they saw he was a proper child*, to execute the grand conditions of the covenant made with *Abraham*. And by *faith* *Moses*, when he was come to years (of discretion) refused to be called the son of *Pharaoh's* daughter; chusing rather to suffer affliction with the people of GOD, (who had kept the faith in the midst of an idolatrous generation) than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of CHRIST greater riches, than the treasures in *Egypt*; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

ward. *Moses* also manifested his faith in **CHRIST** by his despising the threats of *Pharaoh*, and leading the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*; through this same faith, he kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood: and by faith he conducted them through the Red-sea as by dry land. In all which the prophet saw **CHRIST**, though invisible to the carnal eye of nature.

The law given by *Moses* was also a way unto **CHRIST**. The *Israelites* were become like the sinners before the flood: they were corrupted by the iniquitous practices of the heathens, and their hearts were departed from those duties, which **GOD** exacted for a confirmation of the faith in his people from the foundation of the world. So that when **GOD** resolved to deliver them from the house of bondage, he also determined to lay before them in writing those duties, which before were only committed to the repository of their hearts; that his commandments might remain always before their eyes, and take from them all manner of excuse for disobedience to his law.

GOD knowing the hardness of their hearts, and the difficulty of drawing sinners immersed in sin, irreligion and idolatry from their evil courses to a new life, without convincing them first of his almighty power to destroy them, first magnified his omnipotence in the mighty works he performed to bring them out of *Egypt*, and to deliver them from the army that pursued them through the *Red-sea*, and then commanded them to purify or cleanse themselves for the reception of his law and ordinance, in which he would in a most solemn manner renew the ancient covenants with them, and receive them as his own people, notwithstanding they had forsaken him, and provoked him by their temporizing with the idolatrous heathens, to give them up for so many years past to the scourge of their *Egyptian* taskmasters.

That

That these laws should be more deeply impressed upon the *Israelites*, GOD spake them with his own mouth; and wrote them with his own fingers upon two tables of stone. But these laws and ordinances were no new device. For, compare them to the duties practised by the holy patriarchs and fathers of old, who had no written law to walk by, and we shall find that they are the very dictates of GOD, which they had engraven upon their hearts; and only now committed to stone, when the people had gotten stony hearts.

I am not ignorant that some men will say, that this is a law of works, and that by its promulgation, the promise of salvation by faith is made of none effect. This way of reasoning hath deceived many into a wrong opinion and faith of the grace of GOD. But hear the apostle. What saith he to the *Galatians*: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to *Abraham* and his seed, were the promises made. He saith not, and to *seeds*, as of many; but as *one*. And to *thy seed*, which is *CHRIST*." Where we learn, that as the testaments or works of men are held so sacred and inviolable, that no body dare add unto or take ought from them; but they must continue as they are of themselves: there is much more reason why GOD's testament or bequest should remain unalterable, without addition or diminution. Therefore as GOD made a testament or bequest with *Abraham*, and therein promised to give him a seed, in whom he and his children should be saved: and he did appoint the same salvation expressly in one, and not in many seeds; we must add nothing unto GOD's bequest, because he has promised salvation in *CHRIST* only, and not in many; neither in any creature, nor in our own power and works of the law: neither may we imagine that the law was afterwards

terwards added to the intent, as though CHRIST were not able to save us ; or we might obtain salvation by doing the works of the law. And, thus it followeth in the same epistle. " This I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of GOD in CHRIST, the *law*, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the *promise* of none effect. For, if the inheritance cometh by the law, then it is not given by promise. But GOD gave it freely unto *Abraham* by promise." In which scripture we are clearly taught, that salvation is given only of the *grace* of GOD through the *promise*, and not through any works or merit in man ; and that the law of the promise, which is the covenant confirmed before of GOD in CHRIST, remaineth sacred, and unalterable, and giveth us salvation freely.

" Wherefore then serveth the law ? It was added, because of transgression, till the *seed* should come that was promised." The law was given, not to make the promises of GOD of none effect, and to teach men to seek their salvation through works ; but it was given because of *transgression*, or the apostacy of the people of GOD in *Egypt*, who had transgressed the way and truth of their holy progenitors ; and were so besotted with the customs and ways of the *Egyptians*, that they had no knowledge of what was sin, right or wrong. Therefore GOD ordained them a law, out of which they might learn his divine will, be informed what sin, right and wrong is ; and he brought them to a knowledge of themselves, and how to walk with GOD : at the same time being instructed by this proceeding of the Almighty, that the mere natural man is not able to do the works which GOD requires ; and that we stand in need of a mediator. Hence it is evident, that the law was given to fulfil the promise by leading us unto CHRIST.

All which is illustrated by the following passage; "It was ordained or given by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but GOD is one. Is the law then against the promises of GOD? GOD forbid. For, if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of JESUS CHRIST might be given to them that believe. Before faith (or CHRIST) came, we were kept under the law, and shut up unto the faith, that should afterwards be revealed. Thus was the law our schoolmaster to bring us to CHRIST, that we might be made righteous, or be justified by faith." *Gal. iii.*

Nothing can be more evident upon this authority, which is indisputable amongst Christians, that the law was given to hold up our duty continually before our eyes; that it is not contrary unto, nor substituted in the stead of the covenant of promise; and that it serveth to wean us from fleshly lusts and the love of the world, and to bring us in the way of godliness unto JESUS CHRIST; informing us what we ought to do, and what we ought to leave undone; yet without fruit, where there is no faith to make it perfect.

Under the law were many *institutions*; some of which were merely *ceremonial*, and others were *judicial*. In these, it has been thought, there may be found some ground for meritorious works. But they who rightly consider those institutions will be better instructed; and convinced that the ceremonies of the *Jews* neither served nor pleased GOD, when they were not accompanied with faith and a spiritual mind. They were signs and tokens of heavenly things not seen; but were not the things themselves. They were confined to one altar and to one place for the offering up of sacrifices for sin. Which were the

the sign or type of the altar of the cross, and that sacrifice of CHRIST himself once offered thereupon for the sins of the whole world. The entering of the high-priest once a year into the inward tabernacle with blood, signified that our Lord JESUS CHRIST should shed his blood once for all to cleanse and to forgive us our sins, and then to ascend into heaven: and all the offerings and shedding of blood in the sacrifices of the ancient fathers, were so many types of the death of CHRIST, atoning for our sins. Nothing was cleansed amongst them without blood, to shew that our uncleanness must be purged by the blood of CHRIST. And the priesthood ordained to teach, to pray, to make intercession for the people, and to offer their gifts, and to sacrifice, represented the priestly office of the Lord JESUS, who came into this world to teach us truth and righteousness; then to offer himself to his father for our sins, and to be our mediator and eternal advocate in the presence of God.

Hence, it is easy to understand that these rites and ceremonies were given to the people of GOD, not for them to serve the LORD with the letter, and with outward, visible and corporal things, as their whole duty; but to enable them to lift up their minds to spiritual things, to fix upon GOD, as their real good, and to behold CHRIST with the eyes of faith. Thus when the beast was slain in the sacrifices, the Jews might reason with themselves; "We that are sinners, and debtors unto GOD, and might have been killed and condemned by him for ever, are here monuments of his mercy, and wait the coming of the promised seed, which shall die upon the cross, cleanse us with his blood, and by his death restore us unto life; as surely as this beast is slain and offered before our eyes." In like manner, when the blood was sprinkled over the people for the bodily purification, they

they applied it spiritually, “so let the blood of CHRIST be sprinkled to the purifying of our souls.”

From hence grew repentance and godly sorrow for trespasses and sins; and a joy, comfort, praise and thankfulness unto GOD for all his mercies bestowed upon sinful man.

The *judicial* laws, are only an enforcement of the duties contained in the sixth commandment, and more particularly in those words of the gospel, “Love thy neighbour as thyself;” and “what you would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.” And as such, these laws are no other, but those written in the hearts of all the faithful before the days here mentioned.

That this was the belief of all the virtuous kings and *Israelites* after the publication of the law, to the manifestation of CHRIST in the flesh, appears plainly from concurrent testimonies in the holy scriptures; that they trusted in CHRIST, and not in the law of *Moses*.

Joshua the immediate successor of *Moses* was a type of CHRIST. As *Joshua* brought the *Israelites* into the land of promise, even so are we brought into eternal rest, not by the works of the law, nor through our own merit, but by grace through JESUS CHRIST. And this faith, through which *Joshua* was enabled to do great things, continued with little variation till the reign of *David*, a man so excellent in faith, that he obtained the testimony of being according to GOD’s own heart. Whose faith in the promised seed is so largely exemplified in the Psalms, that there is no need to dwell longer upon its certainty and application to the blessed JESUS, of whose kingdom, *ev* affirms, there shall be no end.

*A PRAYER of Thanksgiving to GOD for our
Knowledge of the Means of Salvation.*

TO him that is of power to establish us, according to the gospel, and the preaching of **JESUS CHRIST**, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began ; but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting **GOD**, made known to all nations, for the obedience of faith ; to **GOD** only wise, be glory, through **JESUS CHRIST** for ever. *Amen.*



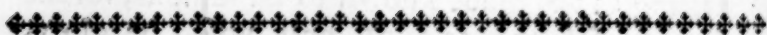
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BOOK

BOOK THE SECOND.

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G O D THE S O N.



C H A P. I.

*Of the Time and Covenant of Grace; and
of the State and Day of Grace.*

AVING treated of the time of the promises, in which GOD through the promised seed, JESUS CHRIST, comforted, cleansed, and preserved his elect from the beginning; and, having shewn that the faith in CHRIST is the same, as was promised for our redemption; and that there was no other way for reconciliation with the Almighty, but through belief in that promise, in all the generations from Adam; let us now add a short instruction concerning the *Time of Grace*, and the performing of all the promises.

Here we find GOD raising up another prophet like unto *Moses*, with a particular charge for all men to hearken unto him, under no less a penalty than eternal perdition, to those that shall be deaf to his call. Yet, the LORD keeps stedfast to his promises; introducing

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ducing none other religion, faith, nor salvation, but the same as he had required of the ancient fathers.

He gave a covenant by JESUS CHRIST; yet it was not given to destroy, but to fulfil the law and the promise. By this covenant the vail was taken away, all types, figures, ceremonies and sacrifices did cease; and all were made complete or perfect to be understood and practised. The text is the law and the prophets: the exposition is found in the New Testament.

The gospel records the birth of the promised seed, JESUS CHRIST; ushered into the world, under the form of a man, by an heavenly host, who sang glory to GOD on high, and on earth peace; unto men good-will: and to take away all doubting, which might arise, concerning his dignity, from a bare inspection of his poverty, another angel was dispatched with this message to the shepherds, "Fear not, behold! I bring you tidings of great joy; this day is born unto you in the city of *David, the Saviour*, even CHRIST the LORD, the promised seed, which should save all the world from the power of the devil, cleanse them from sin, and deliver them from damnation.

A matter of great joy, not to them only, who were immediately concerned about his nativity; but to the faithful, who were dead in the faith of CHRIST; who were past, who were then alive, and remained true to the promised seed, and to all generations that were to come into the world, and to partake of the universal redemption of mankind through his merits and intercession. Therefore the angel adds, "which shall happen unto ALL people;" according as it had been promised to *Abraham*, "In thy seed shall ALL nations of the earth be blessed."

This is the gospel of the new covenant, of which GOD spake, when he promised, "I will be their GOD, and they shall be my people." And, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin

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no more." See *Jer.* xxxi. 31, &c. But this full and perfect forgiveness is not called the *New Testament*, as if there had been no remission of sins to the faithful children of the promise; but because the promise made long before unto the fathers was now confirmed, renewed, fulfilled, and the old figures, by which it was represented, were done away, and abrogated.

Thus the Lord JESUS alone is given by his father and our father, his GOD and our GOD, for a propitiation of our sins: and is set forth for the only salvation of the whole world. So that not only we, that are now alive and believe, are saved; but all they, who either before, or after his incarnation and manifestation to the Gentiles, believed on him, were saved.

However, this salvation, though it be offered unto us freely by the grace of GOD, is not to be obtained without we "fulfill the law with a love from a pure heart, out of a good conscience, and of an unfeigned or undissembled faith."

When the time came for JESUS to preach, and to shew himself unto the world, the word of the LORD came unto *John Baptist*, who, having himself preached unto the people of *Israel* repentance and forgiveness of sins through JESUS CHRIST, bear record that the same JESUS was the fulfilling of the law and the prophets, both GOD and man, and our only and everlasting Saviour, who with the sacrifice of his own body should cleanse the world from sin. "Behold," said he, this is the Lamb of GOD, that taketh away the sins of the world." Furthermore, *John* hung all salvation so perfectly and wholly on JESUS CHRIST, that he plainly declared, "Out of his fulness we have all received grace; for grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST." Therefore, being in prison, he sent all his disciples to JESUS, with command to follow him, and he himself, to the last, continued to preach

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preach CHRIST purely and clearly, without either ceremonies or oblations, as necessary means of salvation.

But what was this record of *John*; compared to that made by GOD himself? When JESUS had received baptism from the *Baptist*, the heaven opened, the spirit of GOD appeared over him in the shape of a dove, and a voice came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

JESUS having entered upon his ministry, to preach salvation, he began with these emphatical words, alluding to the promise of the blessed seed, "The time said he, is come, the kingdom of GOD is at hand; repent, and believe the gospel." To confirm his commission, he healed all diseases, cast out devils, and raised the dead unto life again: which are deeds out of the power of any, but the GOD of our salvation. And in return for those mighty cures and benefits, JESUS requires nothing but a stedfast faith and confidence in him; and lays no greater penalty upon us for our sins, than "Go thy way and sin no more: take heed that a worse thing come not upon thee."

Thus we learn the substance of true religion. It lieth in a right faith, and in an innocent life; that in our conversation we keep ourselves from all filthiness. And at the sametime, to discourage human inventions in GOD's worship, he rejected long prayers, vain-glorious fasting, and giving of alms to be seen of men: and he expressed his dislike to traditions and commandments of men, to diversities of sects, to garments made for distinction, and to all outward shew of religion. But he diligently preached, and positively required that man shall seek for remission of sins, true righteousness and everlasting life, through him only, and through his cross and passion, and by no other means. He declared, that GOD is not pleased with outward ceremony, sacrifices or pomp; but in spirit and in truth; with such works as

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proceed of love and mercy. And also he taught, that the children of GOD are bound to keep themselves from the works of darkness, and that they should live in the light, and walk in holiness all the days of their lives.

JESUS not only preached the gospel, but he offered himself for our sins. "He died, that we might live." His death was accompanied with many things to convince us of the benefits of CHRIST's passion to mankind.—The vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, to shew, that all ceremonies and figurative things were abolished and brought to an end by his death: that the way to eternal salvation was opened: that all the types in the tabernacle, in the sacrifices, in the rites and ordinances, were now fulfilled and abrogated: that the cross of CHRIST was the only object for the faithful to look unto: that the heel of the virgin's seed was well troden upon, in CHRIST's sufferings and death; but that he, at the same time, had so broken the serpent's head, that he triumphed over death and the grave.

The earth quaked, the stony rocks were split asunder; so the preaching of the death of the son of GOD hath altered the face of all the world. It has made great and mighty men to tremble: and many stony hearts have been thereby moved to faith, repentance and obedience to GOD's commands.

Out of his precious side, pierced with a spear, there issued forth *water* and *blood*, to shew us that by the death of CHRIST we are purified from all evil, and made heirs to eternal life: for, water cleanseth, and in the blood is the life of man.

By his resurrection CHRIST teacheth us, "That as in *Adam* all died, even so in CHRIST we shall all be made alive, to follow him up to heaven, there to live with him for evermore."

Thus JESUS CHRIST became the salvation of the faithful, even the Lamb of GOD, which hath been sacrificed

sacrificed from the beginning of the world. This is he whose power and deliverance cleansed all them, that put their trust in GOD, through the blessed seed. This is the right and true salvation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners: and this is the sum of true religion. Whoso perverteth this, GOD will turn away himself from him. Who shall add any thing unto this doctrine, GOD will add unto him the power of his wrath: and whoever shall take ought therefrom, GOD will take so much from his life.

This is the faith, which CHRIST committed to his apostles to preach to all nations: for which end he sent the Holy Ghost, after his ascension, to bring to their mind all that he had taught and commanded, and to give them the gift of tongues, that they might speak to every nation in their native tongue.

Their preaching was of the salvation, which was purchased only by CHRIST, and to be attained unto only by faith. They preached repentance and forgiveness of sin through JESUS CHRIST. They shewed by the power of GOD, that the whole race of mankind being dead in sin, and laid under the dominion of satan, cursed and damned; GOD in his mercy to us all, had sent his son into this world to die for us, and with his death to restore us unto life, and to wash us with his blood, to the end, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, says the apostle, that through JESUS is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and that by him, as many, as believe, are justified from all things, from the which ye could not be justified by the law of *Moses*."

In this covenant we find GOD almighty covenanting on the part of heaven, according to the promise by *Jeremiah*. "I will be their GOD." Where we are to consider him looking upon the children of men

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in a state of sin and corruption ; “ all are gone aside, become filthy, none doing good, no not one. And therefore, this is a covenant of reconciliation, and of peace, for those, who are transgressors of the law, and are at enmity with heaven. Here also we discover God’s eternal decree to manifest the glory of his free grace, love and mercy, in the salvation of lost man, according to that of the apostle ; we are said to be saved “ according to his own purpose and grace given us in CHRIST JESUS *before the world began.*” For without such a purpose of grace, there could never have been a covenant of grace. But justice was to be satisfied. Sin was to be atoned, and his law was to be magnified and made honourable. Mercy could not be shewn, but upon terms agreeable to law and justice. Which required more on the part of man, than nature is able to perform : wherefore it became necessary to seek for and obtain a mediator, who should be able to satisfy divine justice.

This was JESUS CHRIST, the son of GOD. He is the contracting-party in the covenant of grace for man. “ There is but one mediator between GOD and man, the man CHRIST JESUS ;” who gave himself a ransom, and became the mediator of the new covenant, and thereby the federal head, and representative of the spiritual seed.

The necessity of such a representative, surety and mediator, appears from the insufficiency of mankind to perform the conditions required by a just and holy GOD for giving life unto us. Our goods were nothing unto him, no sacrifices nor offerings could atone for the sin of the soul. GOD, therefore, to manifest his grace, provided a Mediator and Redeemer for us ; that we should have nothing to boast of under the covenant of grace, he made this covenant with CHRIST, and not with sinners : CHRIST only performs the conditions. Sinners partake thereof

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by faith. For, "it is of faith, that it might be by grace, not of works, least any man should boast."

The reason for this proceeding appears, that the communication of righteousness and life might be made in as short a way, as the communication of sin and death. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners: so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." As all the human race were lost by the sin of their natural representative: so all they that believe shall be saved through JESUS CHRIST their representative, and the quickning head of the new covenant. Therefore it is written, "GOD sendeth his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us."

Hence we are taught, that believers are justified immediately by the righteousness of CHRIST, without any righteousness of their own intervening: even as all men are condemned upon *Adam's* sin, "before they have done good or evil in their own persons:" or, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life."

The way to enter personally into the covenant of grace, so as to partake of its benefits unto salvation; is to unite sincerely with CHRIST, the head of the covenant, by faith. And being thus grafted into him, we shall partake of all that happiness, which is secured to CHRIST by the everlasting covenant, which he has made with his father for us.

It is a necessary caution, to beware of that practical corrupting of the covenant of grace, by making covenants of our own upon certain conditions to obtain salvation. This was the mistake of the carnal *Jews*, who misinterpreting the intention or spirit of the law corrupted the covenant of grace; looking for life and salvation, not through the promised seed

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alone, as they ought to have done, but for their obedience to the moral and ceremonial laws. Thus many Christians do err, not knowing the scripture nor the power of GOD; for, thinking that salvation is proposed to them in the word, upon the condition of faith, repentance, and sincere obedience to GOD's law, are content to seek for salvation by a conscientious performance of these duties only, as all required on their part of the covenant of grace. But such a practice quite overturns the nature of the covenant of grace: for, "to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt. If it be of works, then it is no more grace."

The sinfulness of this practice is great: it is no less than an overlooking of CHRIST our mediator by the Father's appointment, and substituting ourselves in his place and stead, to do and to work for ourselves in the atonement of divine justice: a presumption to lay a foundation to bear the weight of their salvation, which divine wisdom saw they were quite unable to bear. The consequence whereof must be, that they who thus presume upon their own strength and works to obtain eternal life, will reap sorrow and disappointment. "CHRIST is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Our part, then, is only to take hold of GOD's covenant offered and secured to us in the gospel. And this hold is taken by faith in CHRIST; believing that he is held forth to us, who confide and trust in him, as our Saviour; for our salvation from sin and divine justice, upon the ground of GOD's faithfulness in the promise, that "whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life:" for, he is given for a covenant to us; and "to receive him, is to believe in his name."

Why then is it written, that *righteousness* is a condition of this covenant? This is a condition; but
not

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not exacted of man, but of CHRIST, who saith to the *Baptist*, "It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." This was the condition proposed unto the son of GOD by his Father, on which his seed should be saved, and upon which the promise of eternal life was made to them, and not for any work or deed of their own performance. Thus it is written by *Isaiah*, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities." Wherefore, being about to suffer, CHRIST declares, "This cup is the new testament or covenant *in my blood*, which is shed for you."

By this alone a sinner is intitled to eternal life. "There is none other name under heaven given to man, in whom and through whom we may have health and salvation, but only in the name of JESUS CHRIST: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace: not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness, which is of GOD by faith."

By this, and this alone, the salvation of sinners becomes a debt: therefore this alone is the condition of the covenant. For, the reward is of debt to him, and to him only, who fulfils the condition of a covenant. "To him that worketh, *not* to him that doth not work, but believeth:" therefore it is of debt to CHRIST alone, not to sinners. Consequently, it was CHRIST, that fulfilled the condition of the covenant; we can fulfil no part of it. Faith and obedience are benefits promised in the covenant, upon the condition of it; and in virtue of the promises of the covenant, they are produced in the regenerate: but they cannot be conditions of the covenant; for then infants, who depart this world before they are capable of believing and obeying, could not be saved. A judgment too severe to be passed upon them that

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never offended personally ! Therefore it is manifest that they are saved by the obedience performed by CHRIST in their stead, which is the righteousness fulfilled by him, and the only proper condition of the covenant, “ not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us.”

However, we have not so learned CHRIST, as to reject faith and obedience out of the covenant of grace. Whoever does so in principle or practice, will be rejected out of the kingdom of heaven : who-soever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, or accounted unworthy to inherit eternal life.—Faith is necessary to gain an interest in CHRIST, the head of the covenant : none can attain eternal happiness without actual believing ; nor can any attain it without the spirit of faith be dwelling in them.—Obedience is also necessary, being the means to manifest GOD’s glory, which is the chief subordinate end of the covenant : and without obedience begun here, we cannot hope to enter into glory hereafter.—But faith and obedience are not to be misapplied ; they must keep the place and station assigned them in the covenant by the Father and the Son.—By faith we are made capable to embrace the covenant, to consent unto, and to rest in the condition of the covenant, fulfilled in CHRIST ; and thus we are justified and brought into a state of salvation : “ I am the door, by me, if any man enter, he shall be saved.”—By evangelical repentance and gospel obedience, we testify our thankfulness to GOD, and evidence the truth of our faith, and of our being within the covenant. “ Ye are a chosen generation, says the apostle, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ; that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light ; which

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in time past were not a people, but now are the people of GOD: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

Hear also what the prophet saith, "He hath shewed thee, O man! what is good: and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD." Again, concerning the means of a sinner's repentance before the LORD, he puts this question, "Wherewith shall I come before the LORD?" And after giving several expedients, for that purpose, proposed by the sinner, even to the "giving of the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul," the prophet answereth, "He hath shewed thee, O man! what is good, valuable, and acceptable in the sight of GOD, even the sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST, the *Messiah*, for a sinner's obtaining pardon and acceptance with GOD:" thereby tacitly upbraiding them for such stupidity in an affair of the utmost consequence to their eternal life, as to imagine it was to be acquired by any human means or inventions.

This was the general voice of all the prophets, and the point referred unto by the whole ceremonial law: that they might by faith "look thereunto and be saved."

From the premises, we conclude that our life and salvation entirely depend upon our special interest in CHRIST's righteousness. If we be possessed of it, our salvation is secure: if not, salvation is far from us. Our righteousness, works, doings and sufferings, in this case, are no better than filthy rags: they can give us no right nor title to eternal life: and, though we can see nothing of our own in ourselves, which we can lean to, before the LORD; yet if the righteousness of CHRIST is in our possession by faith, we are alive unto salvation, and sure of acceptance with GOD.

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The LORD giveth a distinguishing character for us to know when we are in possession of CHRIST's righteousness. "Hearken unto me, saith the LORD, by the prophet *Isaiah*, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." Ye that acknowledge the righteousness of CHRIST, as their only righteousness in the sight of GOD, and renouncing all their own righteousness, look to CHRIST alone for life and salvation. For by his knowledge (or the acknowledgment of him by faith) shall my righteous servant, JESUS CHRIST, justify many.

Again, they*that are righteous by faith are a holy people, having the law of GOD in their hearts. They make conscience of internal obedience: for, the holy law rules within them, there, where no eye but of GOD and conscience can reach.—Thus they are distinguished from hypocrites, who are compared to whited sepulchres, beautiful outward, but within full of all uncleanness and filthiness. And the law of GOD ruling in the heart enlightens the whole body, and rules a good man's life and conversation. For, where the heart is reconciled to the purity of the holy law, we delight also in it after the inward man, and long to obtain a full conformity unto it, saying from the heart, "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!"

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of JESUS,—Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith," that they, "who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life, by one, JESUS CHRIST."

Thus you have received a description of the *covenant* and *time of grace*. But, though "many are called few are chosen." We are not only to have a title to grace, but we are to live in grace, or we shall never attain the benefits of CHRIST's meritorious death.

Besides

Of the State and Day of Grace. 111

Besides the *Time of Grace*, there is a *State of Grace*, in which every one must walk, if he expects to be chosen. Therefore there is nothing of so much concern, as to know in what state the soul is towards GOD. How well soever we shall be accomplished in the arts, sciences, and perfections of this world, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, and be saved, except we be regenerate and converted.

But when once we are brought into a state of grace, we are then got past the danger of hell, and shall come to reign in the state of glory. "Though some may be in a safe state, that are not sure of it, yet does our holy rule, says a devout writer, represent it feasible, to know the things freely given us of GOD; to know that we are passed from death unto life, and that JESUS CHRIST is in us. Moreover, we are upbraided with the want of that knowledge, and commanded to make our calling and election sure."

Every one that is godly will "pray to the LORD in a time when he may be found." For, there is a time when men shall call, and he will not answer: yea seek him early and shall not find him. The day of grace, like other days, will have an end; and the space to repent will be over, The bridegroom will be gone in, and the door shut: and the LORD, that with much long suffering endured the vessels of wrath, will at last come to visit them in judgment. Then the calls, the prayers and the cries, which might have done much with him before, shall avail nothing at all.

However, do not mistake this day of grace for some fatal period, or critical moment of life, which when once slipt, man is left without hope. For, though it be true, that the time of visitation may be expired, and we may be deprived of the ordinary public means of salvation; yet, there is no pronouncing the day of grace past to any person, who continues under the call of the gospel, and has any desire

fire to come at that call, as they, who came to work in the vineyard at the eleventh hour. Even, though a man has refused those gracious invitations, the like to which he may never have again; yet, if, by any means, upon any occasion of his life, he shall be brought again (by age, sickness, sad accidents, &c.) to a hearty willingness to come unto CHRIST, and receive him on his terms, and follow him in his ways; that is the accepted time then, and the day of salvation with him: none of his former delays and neglects shall be imputed unto him, so as to deprive him of GOD's favour and mercy.

But should any man's case become so desperate, that there could be found no place of repentance for him, nor any hope of recovery for him, which we have no authority from scripture to determine upon any man living; yet then it should be supposed, that such a reprobation would leave the man under such an obduracy in his sins, as would take away all concern for his wretched state.

Therefore, he who trembles with fear that GOD's patience is worn out by his sins: he, who bewails his sins, and his loss of time, and prays for time to repent and correct his former errors, may rest assured that his day of grace is not past. For, when it is said, "Now is the accepted time," it is not to be limited to any hour, day or year, that is upon me; but it is to be understood of the gospel-time, and the whole life of man: for so long as he lives under the means of grace, that is to him, the day of grace. How vile soever he has been, how long soever he has stood out, how much soever he has offended; yet the calls of GOD are after him, and the terms of life and salvation through CHRIST are offered to him: and the door of mercy is ready open to receive him. "God wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live."

T H E

THE PRAYER.

FATHER of all mercies, and GOD of all comfort, I am truly sensible of thy goodness in sending thy son to redeem mankind, and of my duty to seek for remission of sin through his merits: O then confirm this faith, and fill my heart with thy love and praise, and with such grace, as shall enable me to live as becomes thy redeemed, and called, and adopted in JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

CHAP. II.

Of the NATURE and OFFICES of
JESUS CHRIST.

THE nature of JESUS CHRIST is distinctly expressed by the *Nicean* fathers in these words. "The right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord JESUS CHRIST, the son of GOD, is GOD and MAN: GOD of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and MAN, of the substance of his mother, born in the world. Perfect GOD and perfect MAN: of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting: equal to the Father as touching his GODHEAD, and inferior to the Father, as touching his MANHOOD. Who, although he be GOD and man; yet he is not two, but one CHRIST: one, not by conversion of the godhead into flesh; but by taking the manhood into GOD: one altogether; not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For, as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so GOD and man is one CHRIST."

In this confession of faith are set forth the several passages of holy writ, which expressly affirm that
JESUS

JESUS CHRIST is the true GOD, by whom the world was made, GOD blessed for ever. Was he less than GOD, our worship of him would be idolatry, and our dependence on him, for redemption, would be vain. Our worship is confined to GOD alone, by an expresse command, and under the most severe penalties, of being cast out of the favour of heaven and consigned to eternal misery: and our natural state before GOD is of that kind, as to make us children of wrath, incapable of ourselves to satisfy divine justice for our sins. It cost more to redeem our souls, than can be paid or done by any creature. No less than an almighty power could deliver mankind from the infinite justice of an offended creator.

But, it was CHRIST that redeemed us, and that with an eternal redemption; and not we ourselves: therefore he must be that LORD of all lords, "in whom alone *Isaiah* prophesied, all the seed of *Israel* should be justified, and should glory;" and whose name should be "wonderful, the mighty GOD, and GOD with us. This is CHRIST our Saviour, "in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily:" not only some qualities of the divine nature communicated to him, but the whole divine essence residing in him really and substantially, and so vitally united with his manhood, as to make up one glorious person to mediate between GOD and man.

Let us then join in that holy song, "My soul doth magnify the LORD, and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD my Saviour." We ought to rejoice that we have such a Saviour, who is GOD mighty to save, even to the uttermost: and we may with great safety and comfort repeat with *Thomas*, and say unto CHRIST, "my LORD, and my GOD."

This belief in the divinity of JESUS CHRIST, that he is GOD, increaseth our hopes, dissipates our fears concerning our spiritual state. It gives us confidence in him, and lays the ground of hope, that he
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who is very GOD, became the surety to take the matter upon himself: and not only to interceed, but to purchase the highest favour and salvation for sinners: that our mediator is GOD, as well as man, to personate both, and to secure the interests of both; to give satisfaction to the holy just GOD, by fulfilling all righteousness; and also to give the most comfortable relief to miserable sinners, by such a worthy and sufficient atonement, in their name and stead; wherein GOD has declared himself well pleased: and that, the offended majesty having out of his own treasures been pleased to satisfy himself, and out of his own goodness to interceed, and to forgive us, when justice called for punishment, there remains no manner of doubt concerning the price of our redemption, or of the free grace, with which it was paid for mankind.

Thus we are taught to look upon JESUS CHRIST to be *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, "and greater than the temple;" because he had the godhead not only residing in him for a while, as in the temple, which was a type of his body; but personally united to his human nature.

Therefore, we must admire, adore and bless JESUS CHRIST, as GOD, taking our nature upon him to save us from ruin, and to make us eternally happy. In him we have the pardon of all our sins, the whole justification of our own persons, and the eternal salvation of our souls. So that we must look to him, depend upon him alone, and believe in him, to the saving of our souls.

"Great is the mystery, GOD manifested in the flesh." What can be more surprising, or unaccountable in the world, had we no other light, than mere nature, to direct the enquiry, than to find out how the son of GOD could become the son of man; that he by whom the world was made, should himself be made of a woman: that a mere woman could receive

ceive the person in her womb, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; and bring him forth, as a new born babe, who was from everlasting: that the creator should be humbled into a creature: that he, who was before *Abraham*, should come into the world two thousand years after *Abraham*: and that he should be brought lower than the angels, who is God over all, blessed for ever.

This is a mystery for us to wonder at, but not to be seen through by frail nature. Our Redeemer's name, is therefore wonderful: for, "who, says the prophet, shall declare his generation?" It is a blessing that GOD, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, is not far from every one of us: but in CHRIST JESUS "dwells all the fulness of the godhead," in such a manner, as never in any other creature: for, he that has taken part of our flesh and blood, and was in all things made like unto his brethren, "thought it no robbery to be equal with GOD." "The word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us," taking frail dust and ashes into an inseparable unity with the everlasting deity. Thus, what is most wonderful in itself, proves most comfortable to us; seeing CHRIST the son of GOD is gone as far to cleanse us, as *Adam* did to defile the human race. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, to provide a remedy for the pollution of our sinful conception.

In this act, it may be said "that mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." For, the Father is satisfied in his son, and for his sake reconciled to mankind. And thus truth springing out of the earth, righteousness has looked down from heaven. CHRIST, the true vine, planted by the Holy Ghost, and growing out of a virgin's womb, produced fruit, that maketh glad the heart of man. "To us a child was born; a son was given," who in the body that was given

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to him, wrought the wonders of redemption for us sinners.

Behold ! the son of GOD shut up in the confinement of a virgin's womb, to deliver us from the prison of utter darkness and eternal punishment. Content with the light of this world, that he might bring us into the glory of the next : made lower than the angels, to exalt the nature of man above those celestial beings : not ashamed to call us brethren, that he might make us children of GOD, and joint-heirs with him in the glory of GOD the Father.

In this mystery, we see the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords bowing the heavens and coming down to us, not in the might of his power and justice, but in mercy, with pardon to the condemned, and with salvation to them that were ready to perish. " Look upon me, says CHRIST, and be saved all the ends of the earth : come to me, and believe in me, that ye may never perish, but have everlasting life."

What then may we not expect from such a *mediator*, with whom we partake in nature ; and who would take part of our flesh and blood, that he might be in a capacity to offer himself a sacrifice and atonement for our sins, and be inclined to shew the greater kindness to our souls ? Thus, we are taught also that it is no offence to GOD, when we invoke the man CHRIST JESUS, and fall down at his feet and worship him, who did not lose his godhead by taking upon him our nature, or by taking the manhood into GOD : upon whom we may with great propriety call in the words of the blind man, " JESUS thou son of *David* have mercy on me."

Let us guard against the temptation of those who doubted of the power and offices of JESUS, when they beheld the meanness of his birth and circumstances in life ; and were from thence induced to question, whether such a one was likely to be the Redeemer

Redeemer of *Israel*. Let us not degrade him in our thoughts, who became poor to make us rich; who humbled himself even to the death upon the cross for our sakes. For, the man CHRIST JESUS is also LORD of all, and over all, GOD blessed for ever: the son and heir of heaven, above all angels, principalities and powers: LORD both of the living and dead: invested with all power in heaven and in earth: with a power, that extends over hearts and thoughts, souls and consciences; yea, over death and hell: a power to give life unto, and to kill the soul; to bind and to loose the conscience; to remit and to retain sins; to throw down the strong holds of wickedness in high places; to strike terror into hypocrites; to slay the ungodly; and to give peace and confidence, the spirit of a sound mind, and the blessing of a sure defence and strong consolation, and eternal redemption to a sin-sick soul, which comes unto him through faith, and seeks for remission of sins through his merits only.

This is our Redeemer. When we were shut up under sin and death, and lay exposed to the justice of heaven, our Lord Redeemer came in mercy to set us at large, by paying our ransom and the price of our redemption. And because death was the wages of sin, he, that undertook for our salvation, died in our stead such a death, as was equivalent to the misery mankind had deserved to lie under for all eternity. A work not to be done by any one less than the eternal and most excellent Son of GOD; because there was no creature able to satisfy the divine justice.

This is "the advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." All intercourse between GOD and man is now carried on through this mediator. By him, and only by him, will the majesty of heaven, against whom we have sinned, make any approaches in a way of peace to us. For, there is none other name
under

under heaven given to man, in whom, and through whom we may be saved, but only the name of our Saviour, JESUS CHRIST. Our world is peculiarly under his government, and the whole creation subjected unto him, for the ends of redemption, to carry up many sons from hence to glory.

But the saving benefits, which CHRIST hath purchased, are only to be ours, as united to him. They are to be in him, who, according to the gospel, can be saved by him. If we are not his members, it can avail us nothing: it can stand us in no stead, to say we have heard of CHRIST, or that we have openly professed our belief in his name. Our own choice is absolutely necessary to a special relation to him. He will be a Saviour to none, that will not take him for such, and are desirous to be his saved ones. He did not stay for our consent before he undertook our redemption, and in pursuit of that undertaking, he assumed our nature; died on the cross a propitiation for sin; rose again for our justification; ascended to heaven, and there sits at the right hand of GOD, as "a priest upon his throne, made perfect through suffering, to be the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Thus, in point of atonement and merit, or preparation for both, CHRIST hath finished his work, without standing to enquire whether we were willing, or not: and now in the gospel, the fruits of all, together with himself, are sent and freely tendered to us. But as to actual interest in his person and purchase, this no one at years, and of the use of reason, is capable of, without his own acceptance.

We must disown all other lords and affections, that would rival CHRIST. The world, the flesh, and the allurements of satan distinctly cry, "give me thy heart." Therefore we must renounce these: and whatever possesses the place of CHRIST in the heart,

heart, to the keeping him out, is to be plucked from thence with a holy indignation.

We must close in with the design, in which he is engaged, as the Redeemer and Saviour of lost sinners: we must assent to the report made of him; embrace the offers made by him, in the method settled, and upon the terms laid down: we must approve the whole contrivance of laying our help upon him, as most worthy of GOD, and of all acceptance amongst men: we must look upon him with a pleasant eye, under the character and offices he bears; and we must bid him welcome in the errand, and to all the work, which, as the sent of GOD, he comes to do. In fine, when CHRIST calls unto us, "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in, and sup with him, and he with me;" we ought with a hearty consent answer, "Come in thou blessed of the LORD, why standest thou without."

Let therefore our faith be well-grounded, and firm in this great truth, that CHRIST JESUS is our Redeemer and our advocate with the Father. Since the GOD of peace hath brought again from the dead our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and is in him reconciling the world to himself, not imputing trespasses to them who will flee for refuge to the atonement made, our case is hopeful; let our afflictions be ever so many and great, and we may be happy for ever.

The troubles and distresses, to which we may be exposed, and by which we may be exercised upon earth, are not to be looked upon as necessary fore-runners to eternal misery. In JESUS CHRIST we have a Redeemer able and willing to support the greatest sufferings of the present life; to put an end to them; to do us good by them, and, at last, to deliver us from the wrath to come, and to give us salvation with eternal glory.

Our

Our mediator is eminently distinguished in the New Testament, by the names JESUS and CHRIST.

JESUS signifies a *Saviour*, and is the name given to the son of GOD incarnate by a messenger from heaven, before his birth. He is also stiled *our salvation*. *Behold thy salvation cometh*, says the prophet, who foretold his incarnation: and when old Simeon held him in his arms, he blessed GOD, and said—*Mine eyes have seen thy salvation*.

He is our *Saviour*, as he brings about salvation for us; and we attain it by him: and he may be stiled *our salvation*, because our eternal happiness consists in the enjoyment of him. Salvation conveys to us an idea, that we are preserved and delivered from all evil, and a conferring on us the greatest good. In saving us from evil, JESUS is sometimes said to *deliver us from this present evil world*; and we are elsewhere said *to be saved from wrath through him*: and as all the deliverance we experience, and hope for, is included in the word *salvation*; so are all the spiritual blessings wherewith we are blessed in this, or in the next world. Therefore he is eminently distinguished by the name of JESUS, who is the purchaser and author of our salvation.

Hence we are instructed, that CHRIST JESUS *came into the world to save sinners*. This is the fountain opened for polluted sinners to wash in, and be clean. It is the record that GOD hath given of his son, that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and that through his blood there is redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. In him we have full assurance, that though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow, when washed in the fountain of the Redeemer's blood. All the sinners from *Adam* to CHRIST, who have been admitted into the presence and kingdom of GOD, were cleansed from every spot and stain of sin in this fountain: and all the sinners from CHRIST to the end of the world must wash their

robes in the same fountain, if they hope to appear in spotless purity before God.

As believers have redemption and remission of sins through the most precious blood of CHRIST; so have they also free *justification*: “while we were yet enemies CHRIST died for us, much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” And being justified freely by grace, through faith in his blood, we enjoy another privilege greater than the world can give, and such as the world cannot take from us, even *peace with GOD*:—“being now in CHRIST JESUS, we, who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of JESUS; for, he is our peace,” that Prince of peace appointed and established by the covenant to reconcile GOD and man. Being thus blessed with the peace of GOD ruling in the heart, we become *sanctified*, delivered from the dominion, as well as from the guilt of sin by the merit of the blood of JESUS, who sanctifies the people with his own blood: “for he gave himself for them, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:” that he might redeem them from the power of iniquity, as well as from the guilt and punishment of it, (1 Col. i. 21, 22.) And when believers are thus, through obedience and sprinkling of the blood of JESUS, renewed day by day in the spirit of their minds, then they have another exceeding great and gracious privilege; namely, liberty to approach GOD, and to be called the sons of GOD, and access with confidence unto him, as their reconciled Father.

These are some of the privileges we receive from the most precious blood-shedding of our Saviour: privileges sufficient to demonstrate the infinite cleansing virtue of the fountain of his blood. Did sin bring mankind into bondage? We are delivered from the bondage of sin, and satan, and from death and hell,

hell, and all our spiritual enemies, by the blood of JESUS. Did sin bring guilt into the conscience? The sprinkling of the blood of JESUS speaks pardon and forgiveness, and washes it clean. Did sin make us unrighteous before GOD, and condemn us at the bar of divine justice? Now there is no condemnation to them, who are justified by the blood of JESUS. Did sin provoke the holy GOD, and arm his justice to execute the pains and penalties of the broken law upon the transgressors? Behold! "we have an advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous," and he is the propitiation for our sins; he has made peace by his blood on the cross, and gives us peace of conscience, when we are justified by faith. We are by nature sold under sin, and are born under its power and dominion: but the blood of JESUS has merit and efficacy in it to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living GOD. Sin did shut the door of mercy against us; so that GOD would not hear our prayers, nor accept our services: but since JESUS has opened a new and living way, believers may with boldness enter into the holiest with their petitions: for whatever we ask the Father in his son's name he will give it us.

Thus the blood of JESUS, our Saviour, delivers us from all iniquity; *having obtained eternal redemption for us*, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And it is the property of this blood, that it never loseth its cleansing virtue, though thousands and millions of sinners should daily wash in it. Still it is almighty to do away sin: and whoever shall be washed therein, is made clean and pure to all eternity.

Yet, this precious blood cannot cleanse, unless it be applied. Our Saviour by the sacrifice of himself once offered, obtained merit to cleanse sinners by his blood; but the efficacy of it, in cleansing, comes from the application; as might be exemplified in the sacrifices, purifications and healings under the law;

particularly in the case of the leper, who was not pronounced clean until the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled upon him. Which shews that the shedding of the blood did not cleanse, without the application.

These figures of the law are applied to CHRIST in the New Testament. The apostle *Paul* mentions the sprinkling of the heart from an evil conscience: and the apostle *Peter* tells us, that it is the sprinkling of the blood of JESUS CHRIST, whereby the heart is to be cleansed from an evil conscience, and purged from dead works to serve the living GOD.

This inward and spiritual washing and cleansing, is the work of the Holy Ghost. As CHRIST covenanted to shed his blood; so the Holy Spirit covenanted to apply the merits of it, and to render it effectual to the sinner's heart. The Holy Ghost applies, and faith receives the benefit of that blood, which cleanseth from all sin. "GOD hath set forth CHRIST to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." The shedding of his blood had merit to cleanse; but faith apprehends it, and receives its cleansing virtue. That faith, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, and is wrought in the heart by his operation, relies upon the blood of CHRIST, and puts its whole trust and confidence in its power to cleanse, and then finds the heart sprinkled with it from an evil conscience, guilt being taken out, and peace brought in, with joy and love, and all the graces of the spirit of GOD.

Hence we learn, that the blood of JESUS is sufficient to the saving of all mankind, that come unto GOD by him: but that he is not a Saviour to such, as continue in their sins, in an unconverted state, or vainly hope to be saved by him, without faith in, or obedience to him.

This salvation is offered to all the members of CHRIST's body, which is the visible church, that
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when any of them are convinced of their uncleanness, they may make use of the fountain of CHRIST's blood, and have their hearts cleansed from an evil conscience. Though our sins be ever so many, and so great; so great is the salvation by JESUS CHRIST, that his blood will cleanse from *all* sin: and take out the spot, and guilt of the scarlet-crimson sins, the greatest that can possibly be. We have GOD's word for it: and we are in duty bound to rely on his promises.

Therefore let this name of JESUS excite in us a desire to be cleansed from sin, and a grateful sense of his love for us; and let us encourage ourselves to hope, that having begun the good work in us, he will finish it, when he shall appear, a second time, without sin unto salvation.

The other appellation, CHRIST, by which we call upon the son of GOD made man, is synonymous with the title *Messiah*, or *the Anointed*. Under which character we look upon him appointed by GOD the Father to execute the offices of prophet, priest and king. Therefore he is called *the holy child JESUS, whom GOD had anointed*, Acts iv. 27.

The scriptures, which confirm these offices in the person of CHRIST, are *Luke* iv. 18. where his prophetic office *to preach the gospel to the poor*, is mentioned: *Dan.* ix. 24. where *Daniel* speaking of the promised *Messiah*, describes him as *finishing transgression, making an end of sin, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness*, which evinceth his priestly office: and *Psal.* ii. 2. where he is expressly named a *King*. Yet this anointing was not external, nor visible, with earthly oil; but of a spiritual nature: and the offices he was appointed to execute, were more spiritual, extensive and advantageous than theirs, who were types of him and of his offices. This we read in the *Psalms*, GOD thy GOD hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows.

JESUS CHRIST was designed and set apart to execute these offices *before the foundation of the world*, as the apostle *Peter* writes in his first epistle. And when he came into the world, or was born of the virgin *Mary*, he was declared to be the person, upon whom God had conferred this honour, as may be collected from that passage to the *Hebrews*. *When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of GOD worship him:* but more openly in those divine messages, that proclaimed his birth, and are recorded in *Luke ii. 10, 11*. And in that heavenly proclamation, when he entered upon his public ministry; for then *the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of GOD descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.*

We may argue for the necessity of these offices being united in CHRIST our Saviour, from the condition of fallen man, and from the way in which God designed to bring him to salvation. For, as *the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of GOD; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned:* so it is necessary for CHRIST to execute the office of a prophet, to lead us into all truth, and to give us this spiritual discerning thereof. We are all *guilty before GOD*; neither can we by any means make atonement, satisfy his justice, or procure a pardon: nor can we plead any thing done by us as a ground thereof. So it is necessary for CHRIST our Redeemer to be a priest, that he may make atonement for us, and intercede for us. And as we are by nature obstinate and rebellious, exposed to many dangers and enemies, who are too powerful for flesh and blood to overcome, it was necessary for CHRIST to be invested with the power of a king, to subdue our corruptions, and to restrain and conquer our spiritual enemies.

As to the way in which GOD brings about our salvation, it requires also that CHRIST should be a priest to purchase it; a prophet to proclaim it; and a king to apply it. Accordingly, he is said to be *made of GOD unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*: and is emphatically stiled, *the way, the truth, and the life*.

Besides, in the administration of these offices, and bringing us thereby to salvation, he deals with GOD more especially as a priest, in satisfying his justice, and procuring his favour. For, as the high-priest under the law, who was a type of CHRIST's priestly office, *was ordained for men in things pertaining to GOD, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins*: so CHRIST our great High-priest, by offering himself a sacrifice, performed that part of his ministry which pertained to GOD in the behalf of men. He also deals with GOD, by appearing in his presence, continually making intercession for them: at the same time dealing with men so, as to bring them to GOD; which he does more especially, as a prophet and a king.

The scriptures describe CHRIST in his *prophetic office*, under these titles, *a teacher come from GOD*: the *master* or Lord of our faith: *a lawgiver able to save and to destroy*: the *angel* or messenger of the covenant, to reveal the covenant of grace to us, and to bring glad tidings, that GOD is in him, reconciling the world to himself: the *apostle* and High-priest of our *profession*, to publish peace between GOD and men: *a witness to the people*, and their leader and commander: *a light which shineth in darkness*: the *bright morning-star*: the *glory of the LORD*, and the sun of righteousness, rising with healing in his wings.

The description of his *priestly office* includes two branches, namely, his offering himself a sacrifice, and making intercession for mankind. He is said by St. Paul, *to have offered himself without spot to GOD*;

and now to appear in the presence of GOD for us : having an unchangeable priesthood, and being able to save them to the utmost, that come unto GOD by him.

His kingly office is found in all these passages of holy writ, where he threatneth sinners, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish: his enemies, that would not, that he should reign over them, shall be brought forth, and slain before him.* Where he promises protection and acceptance, *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Where he shews our obligation to obey and submit to him, who in right of his sovereignty, claims divine worship from us. Where he promises that we shall be made *kings and priests to GOD, and sit with him in his throne.* Where he presents to their view all the promises of the covenant of grace, which are in his hand, to accomplish, and gives them ground to expect all the blessings he has purchased: assures them, that he will admit them to the most delightful and intimate communion with himself in this world; that he will keep them from falling, and in the next world present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; and tells them that he will pass over all their follies, ingratitude and rebellion against him, and not lay them to their charge, who repent them truly, and turn to him with all their heart. But CHRIST never appeared more in his regal state than at the time he spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross: whereon through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death, overcame the world, the flesh and the devil.

If we thus believe in CHRIST, we ought to practise his doctrine and to obey his commands. We must not be slothful, but followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises: we must be fervent in spirit serving the Lord. We must be zealous for his honour, and prefer his interest before any worldly advantages: and our zeal must be tempered with

with moderation and meekness. Our obedience must be universal, with all the heart, all the soul, and all the strength; resolved never to fly from a duty: for, CHRIST expects that all his subjects should not only obey him, but that they should do this with unfainting perseverance, *as not being of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul*: he holds forth *the cross*, which they must take up; and follow him: and they must arm themselves against all men, of whom *they will be hated for his name's sake*.

If then we are willing to be obedient to CHRIST, we are first to cast ourselves at his feet with humility and reverence, out of a true sense of our own vileness and ingratitude, and of his clemency and grace; who, notwithstanding our unworthiness, invites us to come unto him, that he may refresh us. We must also entirely depend upon him for grace to enable us to behave conformable to the obligations of his covenant; that we may not turn aside from him, nor deal treacherously with him: and likewise depend upon him for the accomplishment of those promises, which afford us matter of relief and encouragement: and this to be accompanied with a fixt purpose or resolution to wait on him, in all his ordinances, as means appointed by him, in which we hope to obtain those blessings we stand in need of.

THE PRAYER.

O Almighty Father, who hast given thy only begotten Son, who was one with thee from all eternity, to take upon him the nature of man; and didst appoint him to do the great work of salvation for the human race: give me grace to believe in him, whom thou hast sent to be a saviour, to be the only begotten son of GOD, and to be equal with the Father: and that being very GOD, as well as the

son of *David*, he is able to the uttermost to save all that come unto him: and that I may never be persuaded to seek for thy love and mercy, in and through any other name, and means, than in and through the name and mediation of the same thy son *JESUS CHRIST*, my only mediator and redeemer. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

Of CHRIST'S Humiliation. Under which we view the Son of GOD made Man: His Obedience to the Law; his Sufferings; his Death and Burial.

THE divine person, who, in the foregoing chapter, is described with such infinite power and perfections, presents himself now in a state of the greatest humiliation. *He emptied himself of his glory; he took upon him the form of a servant: when the fulness of time came, GOD sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law; who thought it no robbery to be equal with GOD; yet took upon him the shape of a servant, and was made in likeness of men; and being found in fashion, as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. So that, for as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. And both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren: and he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; because in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; like unto us all, sin only excepted.*

The truth of these scriptures appears first in the birth of *JESUS CHRIST*. In this the son of GOD submitted

submitted to a state, in which human nature itself is under a natural incapacity of enjoying or conversing with the LORD our maker; and of being useful to men. For, what is the infancy of the most noble, most wise and the most powerful? It is an inactive state: not capable of reflection, and destitute of the regular exercise of thought; exposed to various evils; sensible of much pain and uneasiness, without knowing the cause, or how to seek relief. They that assert the contrary in the babe JESUS, would do well to recollect and consider how St. *Luke* informs us, that JESUS *increased in wisdom*, as well as *stature*; and they must believe, that CHRIST's humiliation began in those natural infirmities, which are inseparable from a state of infancy.

If we look to the way of grace, we may be soon convinced of the necessity of this great humiliation. Without this act of GOD's love the curse must have been born: justice could not be satisfied. The nature that transgressed must die. The party offending must give satisfaction in his own person, or by a sufficient surety.

By our LORD's becoming man he gained a right, in the flesh, to redeem sinners: by this the law had a right to exact the debt of him, for which he became their surety: and, by this, man hath access, through grace, unto the mercy of GOD.

This is also a chief support of our faith. If CHRIST were not man our faith would be vain. Without this he could not be the *Messiah*. And by this we see the only way he could be liable to our debt, and how his satisfaction is communicable to us. Neither can there be a greater attractive to draw us to CHRIST, than to find him to be a man, our brother, born of a woman, made under the law.

JESUS CHRIST was not only subject to these natural infirmities; but he was born of a woman, who was far from being honourable in the eye of the

world; and was treated with that uncommon degree of neglect, that she could get no admission into such lodgings, as other travellers had, in an inn, though her condition might have demanded more compassion; but she was pushed into a stable, and obliged to bring forth her son JESUS there, and to lay him in a manger.

Again, her husband *Joseph*, the reputed father of JESUS, was no better than a carpenter, who got his bread by the sweat of his brow. A circumstance, which, during the ministry of JESUS, furnished his enemies with several insinuations to lessen him in the esteem of the people.

His life was a continued state of humiliation. JESUS submitted to the law, under which he was made man. He obeyed not only the moral precepts; but he submitted to yield obedience unto several positive laws. It became him to *fulfil righteousness*, as he said to *John Baptist*: and therefore he elsewhere speaks of himself, as coming into the world to *fulfil the law*. He humbled himself to be circumcised; to be presented in the temple on the day of purification; to keep the passover, &c. Besides he was subject to the curse of the law, that is due to mankind for sin. For, as he obeyed what the law enjoined; so he suffered the punishment it threatened upon sinners.

JESUS was no sooner born, but he experienced the indignities of the world. King *Herod* sought to put him to death. He was obliged, by a warning from heaven to his parents, to flee his native place into a strange country; and to take up his abode in a city, during the greatest part of his appearance upon earth; of which the *Jews* harboured a most despicable opinion. Here at *Nazareth* he lived in obscurity, for almost thirty years, dependent on, subject unto, and, probably labouring hard to assist his parents. Which became a continual objection to the efficacy

efficacy of his ministry; when, he afterwards appeared in the character of the *Messiah*.

Though *the world was made by him, the world knew him not* in so long a state of humiliation. When entered upon his ministerial office, *the princes of this world* treated him with the utmost contempt and indignity: and though he confirmed his doctrine with many incontestable miracles, wrought in his Father's name, they questioned his mission, denied him to be the CHRIST, and reproached him, as one working miracles by the power of hell. They traduced his moral character, and represented him to be a vile sinner; because he conversed with such, to bring them to repentance, and to draw them unto GOD. They called him a deceiver, though the evidence of truth appeared as bright as the sun, in every thing that he said or did. The *Gadarenes* unanimously besought him to depart out of their coasts; because he had cast the devils out of a man into a herd of swine. Others shut their doors against him, and refused him that common help, relief and civility, they paid to common travellers; which drew from him this observation, *Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head*. And the *Jews* several times before his crucifixion attempted to take away his life. At one time they *took up stones to stone him*, because he asserted his divine glory. Even his fellow-citizens, among whom he had been brought up, and to whom he usually read and expounded the scriptures on the *sabbath-day*, not only thrust him out of the city, but would have cast him headlong from the *brow of a hill*, had he not exerted his divine power, and imperceptibly withdrawn himself out of their hands.

Thus JESUS CHRIST endured, not only the contradiction of sinners against himself; but the most injurious and ungrateful treatment from those, to whom he had been so great a friend. So that in every

every thing, as the prophet foretold, we behold him *a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.*

Why then do any of the members of CHRIST repine at their mean, suffering and hard lot; seeing that it comes very short of the contempt, reproaches, sorrows, afflictions and griefs that accompanied their Lord and Head.—It is a shame that our hearts and minds should be set so much on those things, that he, who is our LORD and Master, and heir of all things, possessed so little of, when he was in the world: or, that we should place our happiness in their enjoyment, or our misery in the want of the pomps and vanities, or even of the necessaries of life. More patience under the cross, under want, weariness, reproaches, &c. would become us much better.

Another point of humiliation is particularly found in the conflict of our Saviour with the *temptations of satan.* *He was, in all points, tempted, like as we are; yet without sin.* In which scripture we are taught, that the temptations with which he was tempted, did not arise in the soul of JESUS, as in the soul of sinful man, from the corruption of nature, according to that of the apostle saying, that *every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed*; but from that inveterate hatred, which the devil hath towards mankind; prompting him to try every means to deceive, to entice, and to draw the human race into rebellion against GOD, and to prevent their redemption.

The devil attacks JESUS at the first entrance upon his public ministry, in a most extraordinary and forcible manner, immediately after his baptism; when a voice from heaven had just before given this glorious testimony to the world, *This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Then was he led, says the evangelist, *into the wilderness, or immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness,*

wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. Where we learn that the faithful have reason to prepare themselves to meet with great temptations, when they, at any time, obtain extraordinary manifestations of divine love: these being the means whereby GOD prevents man from being *exalted above measure*. Here also we see the malice and envy of satan against the people of GOD; that he is always endeavouring to bring them down to hell, whom he thinks the nearest to heaven.

Again, the incident of this temptation, just before JESUS entered upon his public ministry, is an instruction, that when GOD designs that his people should engage in any great, useful and difficult work, they are like to meet with great temptations, by his divine permission, in order to put them upon the watch, and to fortify them against many other temptations, which they, in the common course of things, may expect to meet with, in the discharge thereof. Thus we read that *satan* tempted *Moses*, when called to go into *Egypt*, and *Jeremiah*, when sent to a people, *whose faces he was afraid of*; suggesting, to these prophets and messengers of the LORD, several unwarrantable excuses, to discourage them from undertaking the work, to which they were appointed.

If we consider this temptation in all its parts, there will be matter of meditation upon the stupendous folly of the old serpent, presuming to entice and to draw away the Son of GOD incarnate from doing the will of his Father: it being impossible to overcome him, who from his conception was filled with the HOLY GHOST, and was effectually secured from falling, by his divine unction. Here also we are to observe the devil's boldness and undaunted courage, which lets no human creature pass through this life, without being tempted, be he ever so great, or ever so good.

From

From CHRIST's temptation we likewise infer the greatness of his sufferings. He could not, in his human nature, but be grieved thus to be attacked, insulted and tempted by the worst of his enemies, to turn him aside from his allegiance to GOD : though the issue thereof was glorious to himself, and shameful to the devil. An event that affords the greatest encouragement to believers under their manifold temptations. For, why should they think it strange that they are tempted, when they hear that ^IESUS CHRIST the Captain of their salvation, was so tempted. They learn also, that it is not a sin to be tempted ; but that it becomes sinful only when we comply with the temptation to do evil. And here likewise we are filled with hope, that we may not only be made partakers of CHRIST's victory ; but receive help and succour from him, when we are tempted : forasmuch as he who *suffered*, being *tempted*, is able to *succour them, who are tempted*.

CHRIST was not only tempted of satan ; but he was humbled by his great sympathy and compassion, which he bore towards objects of pity and distress. Many of the afflictions which he endured, took their rise from the sin and misery of others. Thus he is said to *be afflicted in all the afflictions of his people*. He was grieved for the degeneracy and apostasy of the *Jewish* nation ; that they would not receive his doctrine, but cast the gospel from them. He looking upon *Jerusalem* as a self-ruined city, he *wept over it*. And being sometimes grieved for the remains of corruption, and the breakings out thereof in those, whom he loved, in a distinguishing manner, we find him afflicted in spirit, by reason of the hardness of their hearts, and the unbelief of his disciples.

To these may be added those afflictions, which arise from hunger, thirst, fatigue, poverty and the want of the common necessities of life, to which he, who supplies all things living with plenteousness,

ness, submitted; it being agreeable to the state of humiliation, in which he was during his abode in the flesh.

But CHRIST's humiliation is more visible in his death and passion. Let us follow him into the garden of *Gethsemane*, where his soul was sorrowful, even unto death.

The first station we meet him at, is at his prayers; which he uttered with such agony at the approach of his ignominious death, that he sweat drops of blood, and with a filial petition to the Father, begged, that if it were possible, the bitter cup might be removed, or that he might be delivered from it.

The second station presents him in the hands of *Judas* the traitor, and bound by the whole multitude of the *Jews*. Here we see that GOD permitted one of his disciples, and even an apostle, to betray his master JESUS CHRIST; as an instance that hypocrites sometimes mix themselves with his faithful servants.

But this was not so grievous to JESUS, as the affliction he felt, when he saw that *all his disciples forsook him and fled*; and that he was disowned and denied by *Peter*, who had promised to die with him.

Having apprehended JESUS, they bound him like a common malefactor. No doubt but he, to whom the winds, the sea and the grave had paid obedience, could have broken the bands or cords in pieces, *as threads of linnen cloth*, more easily than *Sampson*; but it was the love he bore to mankind, and his submission to his Father's will, that made him submit to be tied and held with cords: and thereby left us an example, that we must submit to be bound with the bands of charity, with the tye of obedience and humility, and with the obligation of such duties, as appertain to the state and condition we live in. For, they only can be said to be wise unto salvation,
who

who thrust their feet into her fetters, and their necks into her chains, and are not weary of the bands of true wisdom.

His third station is in the house of *Annas* the high-priest, to which he was hurried, from the garden, with shoutings, reproaches and ignominy, through the streets, and a blaspheming mob, in a city, where a few days before he had made his public entry amidst the acclamations of the people saluting him with hosannas, and welcoming him with a *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD*.

Behold ! that divine person, by whom the heavens were made, and had confirmed his doctrine by miracles, hauled as a criminal to the tribunal of a judge, whose province was to judge of doctrines. The creator is placed with indignity before his creature : and the eternal wisdom of GOD is brought to the bar, to render an account of his doctrine to an arrogant smatterer in the law : surrounded by doctors puffed up with their human learning, and rejoicing, as conquerors rejoice, after a prey is taken, while they examine him concerning his doctrine and disciples.

CHRIST heard their reproaches with silence, neither did he answer any thing concerning his disciples : because we are not to be too forward to resent private or personal injuries ; nor to give our opinion of persons, whom we have not found firm and steady in the principles of virtue. Their taunts and invectives centered in himself ; they did no further damage. The disciples by their forsaking of him, shewed that they were wavering in the faith ; and therefore as he could not speak in their favour, JESUS would say nothing to their disrepute. But he answered resolutely to the point of doctrine : because thereon depended the effect of his ministry and the salvation of mankind. See *John xviii. 20, 21*.

This answer subjected the blessed JESUS to further indignities. One of the officers standing by struck him with the palm of his hand, (which in the eastern countries

tries is accounted a mark of the greatest reproach) saying, *answerest thou the high-priest so?* Should we consider this act of humiliation in all its circumstances; that it was done by a furious enraged officer (or perhaps soldier) in an assembly or court of justice, to a person whose sanctity of life, and miracles had gained him the respect and admiration of all, that had heard him, and upon so unjust an account, for so just and prudent an answer; it must heighten our ideas of our Saviour's humiliation, who without shewing any emotion of resentment and revenge, modestly justified himself, that he might not seem to have behaved disrespectfully to the high-priest; whom he honoured on account of his place and authority. *If I have spoken evil, said JESUS, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?*

Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas. A journey both painful and ignominious. JESUS was hauled and dragged again through the streets at midnight, with all the bad usage, that could be thrown upon the most notorious malefactor: and he who knew no sin was put into the power of a court, which suborned false witnesses to swear his life away: but even this method, under the colour of justice, did not serve the purpose of his wicked judges and accusers. Their witnesses did not agree. The judge himself, the infamous high-priest *Caiaphas*, was obliged to put such a construction upon the words of JESUS, acknowledging himself to be the CHRIST, as to find him guilty of death for speaking the truth.

This sentence exposed JESUS to the utmost reproach, and contempt of the mob. *They spit in his face, blindfolded him; struck him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, &c.* And this ill-treatment may be supposed to continue till morning: all which time his sacred person was left to the discretion of an illiterate, deceived and outrageous multitude

multitude of soldiers and the populace. For, it was not till the morning that the chief priests and elders having consulted together against JESUS to put him to death, delivered him over to the secular power to be executed.

Then all the multitude took him, and led him to *Pilate*, as one justly convicted of sedition, treason and blasphemy, and worthy of death. *Pilate* soon discovered the hatred of his accusers, and finding no fault that could be proved against him, endeavoured to get clear of a cause, which would otherwise make himself accessary to the shedding of innocent blood. For this end, he ordered the guard and the accusers to carry JESUS to *Herod's* judgment-seat. Which added to the miseries of this day's humiliation, not only from the nature of such a commitment, but from the contempt and outrage with which JESUS was treated by *Herod*, who set him in the most contemptuous light, by ordering him to be arrayed in a gorgeous robe, and to be reconducted in that dress with ignominious taunts, to *Pilate's* jurisdiction.

Pilate seeing that for envy the *Jews* persecuted JESUS unto death, used several means to persuade them from such an unjust proceeding. He proposed a commutation, to release JESUS, and to order *Barabbas*, a notorious murderer, for execution. But the *Jews* would not consent. He then tried to assuage their rage, by ordering JESUS to be whipped publicly and unmercifully; hoping thereby to set him at liberty.

In this state of humiliation we behold the Saviour of the world stripped naked, tied to a pillar like a common slave condemned for a notorious crime, and cruelly scourged, though by the judge's own confession there was no fault to be found in him. No slave was ever so cruelly handled. Here was fulfilled the prophecy, which saith, *He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with*
grief.—

grief.—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

The soldiers, when JESUS was taken from the pillar, platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head; and they put on him a purple robe, and a reed in his right hand, and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him saying, *Hail King of the Jews!* In this condition JESUS was presented, with much scorn and derision, by Pilate to the Jews, who sought his life.

Let us figure unto ourselves the contemptible sight, which JESUS made on this occasion; and we by the eye of the soul shall see him under this form, our GOD and our LORD, the Messias, our Saviour, our Teacher, and good Shepherd: who for the love of mankind humbled himself to the condition of a slave; and suffered himself to be contemned and scoffed, that he might lower our pride; to be stripped naked, that he might correct our covetousness; to be harrassed with excessive torments, that he might teach us patience in tribulation, and to moderate our anger and passion.

When Pilate could not prevail with the Jews to release JESUS, he passed sentence of death upon him, and delivered him to be crucified. They, who were appointed to put this sentence into execution, loaded JESUS with a heavy cross, and hurried him with it upon his shoulders, through the streets, to mount Calvary. All which ignominy and distress JESUS bore patiently for our sins, and thereby, in his own person giveth us a lively example of evangelical poverty.

At the place of execution, his hands and his feet were nailed to the cross. The priests, the soldiers, and others, blasphemously upbraided him with his want of power, *He saved others, himself he cannot save:*
with

with arrogance for taking upon him the title of King, *If he be the King of Israel, let him come down: with presumptuously calling himself the son of GOD, and relying upon him, He trusted in GOD, let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the son of GOD: if thou be the son of GOD come down from the cross.*

What did JESUS do and say? He submitted to these indignities for our sins: *He was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our sins.* He reviled not, but prayed for his enemies and persecutors, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* He that before had rebuked his disciples for desiring him to *call for fire from heaven*; and taught them to *pray for them that persecute and abuse them*, did not call for fire as *Elias* did upon his persecutors, neither did he curse them, as *Elisba* did the children that affronted him: but he interceded with his Father for pardon for his enemies.

It heightened the punishment of JESUS to crucify him between two notorious malefactors. He was born between two beasts, and he submitted to die between two thieves, to give us an example of humility.

About the ninth hour JESUS cried with a loud voice, saying, My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me! A loud cry and voice are tokens of excessive grief: for here JESUS was left alone in his human nature to suffer exceeding great torments; destitute of all manner of comfort, which might arise from the soul; forsaken of his own people, even his disciples: and foreseeing the ingratitude of the most part of the world, which would reject his counsels, and despise his examples; for whose sake he was then undergoing such bitter torments.

JESUS CHRIST could easily have delivered himself from that dereliction and anguish of mind by giving way to the joys of the beatifical vision: but he would

would endure all things, that he might be the more like unto us, and withal to instruct us, how to behave in time of dereliction, dryness in devotion, and trouble of mind; from which no body, not the most virtuous and perfect of us all, can be exempt. If God the Father left his beloved son in this manner; no wonder that he seems to leave us to ourselves for some time without all comfort. Therefore, whenever this happens we must not despair: we may complain with a filial submission to a father's correction, *my God, my GOD! why hast thou forsaken me.* But we must not depart from him. We must draw nigh to God by prayer, and hold fast on his divine promises, by patience; because our deliverance *will surely come, it will not tarry*, Habb. ii. 3. Though our sufferings should be many and excessive tormenting, we must look upon them, as temptations to try us, and, if we persevere in God's service, he will *send us a way to escape, and will not forsake us wholly.*

Let us observe how JESUS subjoined, *Father, not my will, but thine be done.* By which we are called upon to guard against mistakes about that inward soul-pinching, expressed in the foregoing words. For, they shew us that there was no sinful or un-avoidable confusion or perturbation of mind in CHRIST upon the cross; no fretting or anxiety, nor any discontentedness at the engagement; nor any jealousy of the Father's love; nor any distrust, as to the event: for I have power (said he) to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again; and I will rise again the third day: he knew that the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and him stood firm and sure. But it was the consideration of God's then coming, as the party, to exact the elect's debt of him, and his standing at the bar to answer for it, which put him into that agony. And though considering CHRIST, as man personally united to the Godhead (whereby he was kept from sinking) he had
no

no distrust to be carried through; yet considering him as a man suffering, and that, (if I may so express myself) there was an eclipse of that sensible joy that proceeded from the two natures together, it is not possible to conceive otherwise, but that wrath and anger must have been some way dreadful to him in that condition.

JESUS spake once more upon the cross and said, *It is finished.* By submitting to death, even the death of the cross, he had performed the will of his heavenly Father: and by his doctrine, works and sufferings, he had fulfilled the law and the prophets. Well therefore might he say to his eternal Father, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, &c. and I come to thee.* And again, with a loud voice, as a sign of victory over death, sin, the devil, and the utmost hatred and malice of his enemies, *Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.* Which is a most excellent lesson how to recommend ourselves unto God at the hour of death, and what we ought to be chiefly careful of at that time, when the world and the devil are most diligent to draw us from the care of our soul.

Having thus finished the work, JESUS CHRIST bowed his head and yielded up the ghost. Behold the sun of glory eclipsed! the temple of the living God dissolved! the author of life yielding to the stroke of death! All this to convince us that we are *bought with a price*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Let us therefore glorify God both in our body and in our spirit: least we shew ourselves more unsensible of this act of humiliation than the inanimate creation, which at the time JESUS gave up the ghost, proclaimed his death in a most singular manner: *The sun was darkened: the earth did quake: the rocks were rent: the graves were opened: and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst.*

Thus, heaven's gates were opened for the human race; divine justice was satisfied by the blood of

CHRIST:

CHRIST : and we, who before were under the tyranny of satan ; cast off from the face of GOD by the heinousness of our sins ; and not being able to atone for our transgressions, were exposed to eternal damnation, when behold the son of GOD *sent redemption unto his people*, Psal. cxi. 9. offering himself a sacrifice for our sins, *that all that believe in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Look now unto JESUS the author and finisher of our faith ! Imagine yourself at the foot of his cross, and that you hear him call out in the words of *Jeremiah*, *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me.* Meditate attentively upon every circumstance, and we shall be soon convinced of the humiliation of CHRIST JESUS, and taught many a good lesson for Christian faith and practice. He was hanged as a thief ; condemned at four several tribunals ; hurried along the streets, and stigmatized with the name of a blasphemmer, impostor, seducer, glutton, fool and madman. His head was pierced with thorns : his face buffeted with fists, and defiled with spittle : his shoulders cut with whips and stripes : his hands and feet bored through with nails : his side pierced with a lance, and his whole body embrued in his own blood ; so that *there was no sound place found in our crucified Saviour, from the sole of the foot to the crown of his head.*

Let us now consider the procuring cause of CHRIST's death and sufferings. It was the same, by which death first entered into the world. For, *his soul was made an offering for sin.* He was wounded and bruised for transgressions and iniquities, which were not his own, but ours. *He bore the sin of many.* He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows. Though he did no sin, yet he bore ours in his own body on the tree, that we might be healed through his stripes.

Thus we see, that CHRIST's own love to put himself in the sinner's stead brought this humiliation upon
H him ;

him ; and that he designed to work and purchase the sinner's salvation by his satisfaction. *For, he was delivered up for our offences : he came to give his life a ransom for many : he was slain to redeem us to God by his blood : he has made our peace through the blood of the cross : he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself : and the blood of JESUS CHRIST, the Son of GOD, cleanses us from all sin.*

In these gracious terms runs the whole stream of the Gospel ; holding up to the eye of faith this great and precious truth, that the intention of CHRIST'S crucifixion was for satisfaction ; that the justice of GOD might be satisfied ; and that his people, in danger thereof, might be acquitted. And as here we see the justice of heaven to terrify us, and sin painted in its bloody colours to humble us, to break our heart for it, and to turn our heart against it : so in our expiring Redeemer we perceive a love stronger than death ; because the most ignominious and cruel death could not quench, or cool it ; but he has expressed the greatest of all love, in laying down his life, and that not for his friends, but for his enemies. *For, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his Son.*

Here also we meet with a reviving cordial, when we droop under the sense of our sins and the dread of GOD'S wrath. For there are no spiritual maladies that cannot be cured by the all-healing blood of JESUS : nor any sins so deadly, that his meritorious death cannot discharge us from. He is the Lamb of GOD that taketh away the sins of the world. He is our Redeemer from the curse of the law, himself being made a curse for us : Gal. iii. 13. We are all conceived in sin, and we are all transgressors from the womb ; so that if the Lord should be extreme to mark what is done amiss, heavy matters might be laid to our charge. But *JESUS has taken away the hand-writing, that was against*

us, *nailing it to his cross.* Here then we are to seek for shelter from all danger, under the shadow of a crucified Saviour : being sprinkled with his blood, we shall be protected from the power of the destroying angel : and through faith in that blood we are justified and reconciled unto God.

These acts of humiliation in the person of the Son of GOD made man are to be applied to excellent uses.—Here believers may wonder at the exactness and infinity of GOD's grace, and at the heart-affecting, and soul-ravishing love of their mediator : a grace, that spared the insolvent debtor, and exacted payment from the surety, who was the Son of his love.—Here they may exercise their love on the Mediator, who paid so much, and so willingly and cheerfully for them, without the solicitation or interposition of any creature.—Can they behold JESUS in the presence of *Pilate* in their stead, not answering, when he was accused unjustly, and *Pilate* marvelling at his silence, and convinced of his innocency ; and shall they remain without feeling an affection for so gracious and patient a mediator ; who knew no sin, and suffered all for the faults, miscarriages, and transgressions of mankind ?

What may not the believer expect from GOD, when he did not spare his own Son for him ? And what may he expect from CHRIST, who spared not himself for his sake ? The good Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep, held his tongue and did not rebuke, nor find fault with, those that smote him ; will not reject nor upbraid the poor sinner coming to him, and pleading for the benefit of his satisfaction. He will rejoice at his conversion.

But, as if his crucifixion had not been sufficient to exemplify the humiliation of the Son of GOD made man, JESUS would also descend into the grave. Here CHRIST's human nature continued, like other

mortals, departed this life, under the *dominion of death* for three days: which state of CHRIST'S body must be reckoned a part of his humiliation; because, though his soul passed immediately into paradise, as he promised the good thief; yet there was some degree of perfect blessedness, which the man CHRIST JESUS could not be possessed of, till his body and soul were reunited. Again: so long as he continued under the power of death, our Redeemer was not fully discharged by the justice of GOD: neither could the work of satisfaction be complete, till JESUS was declared to be the Son of God with power, and to have fully conquered death and hell by his resurrection from the dead. Therefore this must be accounted a part of CHRIST'S humiliation.

During the deposit of CHRIST'S body in the grave, his soul, which he had commended so earnestly into the hands of his heavenly father, at the time it departed from his body on the cross, was in heaven, and not sent to preach the gospel to those, who, by reason of the darkness of the Old Testament dispensation, were detained in prison, as being unfit for the heavenly state: for the Scripture (1 Pet. iii. 19.) upon which that supposition is founded, means no more, but that *Noah* had been sent to preach to the old world, *who were disobedient*; and for this were sent into the prison of hell, *after the long suffering of GOD had waited on them, while the ark was building.* Neither is that interpretation better grounded, which makes CHRIST descend into hell to triumph over the devils and spirits confined in the abyss of misery. CHRIST, indeed is recorded *spoiling principalities and powers, and making a shew of them openly, triumphing over them*: but it was on his cross, not in hell: nor was it by going down into that place of torment that CHRIST is said to *destroy him, the devil*

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devil, that had the power of death; but that destruction was wrought by his death on the cross, which was the seat of his triumph over death, sin, and the devil.

Before we conclude this subject of CHRIST's humiliation, let us, with a *Christian* spirit, and a soul-seeking desire of improvement, meditate upon the words of the Prophet, who, in the evangelical stile, foretold that the *Messiah made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth: yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*

In this scripture we find the reasons for CHRIST's sufferings. Here we are instructed, that GOD's good pleasure ordered it so: *it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief.* This reason is taken from the fountain, where his sufferings proceeded. Another reason is taken from the nature or end of his sufferings, and teacheth that *his soul was made an offering for sin.* Though he suffered in the eye of the world, as an offender or sinner; yet before GOD he was made only an offering for sin, to satisfy for, and to remove the punishment due to, the sins of his elect people, and to make way for their freedom.

Therefore it is productive of the following notable and noble effects: namely, (1) *to see his seed;* a numerous offspring to be saved through him. (2) *To prolong his days;* by his resurrection, ascension and intercession, for his people, at the right hand of GOD, for ever. And (3) *to fulfill the pleasure of the Lord;* by giving eternal life to as many as should believe on him; by delivering many captives from the devil, and setting many prisoners free from sin, death and the grave; and by gathering the

sons of GOD together into his fold, that they may feed on his word, drink of the waters of salvation, and inherit everlasting glory.

This scripture is alluded to by the apostle, who writing to the *Hebrews* puts them in mind, that CHRIST JESUS is the *Messiah*, who by his once offering up of himself, perfects for ever those who are sanctified. So that there is no other name under heaven, whereby sinners can be saved, saith another apostle, but the name of JESUS.

Here we also gather the necessity we are under to make use of this one offering of CHRIST. For, if we believe him to be the one offering to take away sin, and that no other offering will be accepted by GOD the Father; we must seek for salvation, even for the remission of our sins, through his merits. Again: if we be under sin: if sin and death, the wages of sin, be inseparably knit together; and if there can be no reconciliation with GOD, till we are made free from sin and wrath; then there is a necessity that sinners endeavour to obtain a title to, and an interest in, this one offering and sacrifice of CHRIST thus dying for us.

This is evinced by the following reasons. If men were not born in sin and children of wrath; and if there were any other sin-offering, or any other way or means to escape the curse and wrath of GOD due for sin, we should not lie under such an obligation to rely on CHRIST'S sacrifice or offering: but seeing that all men are under sin, and obnoxious to GOD'S curse and wrath, because of it; and seeing there is no other thing that can take away sin; then there is an absolute necessity seriously to make use of this means of salvation, and to obtain an interest in this sin-offering.

If we desire to make a proper use of this doctrine, let us take care to avoid the practice of those worldlings, who generally own and maintain the truth

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truth of the gospel ; that are ever under the conviction, that they are sinners, and that CHRIST is the only sin-offering to take away sin ; but are so blind, so deaf, so neglectful of their duty and interest, as never to make use of CHRIST, and of his sacrifice to take away their sins, to have wrath removed, and to make their peace with GOD.

There were many *Jews*, who were taught by their daily sacrifices, which were types of this one offering of CHRIST's body on the cross, that there was no other way to gain pardon and peace with GOD, but by their trusting to it ; yet the most of them, while they were thus employed, slighted this one sacrifice, according to that of the apostle, who tells the *Romans* that *being ignorant of GOD's righteousness, they went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit themselves unto the righteousness of GOD.*

It is no less certain that many, who hear this Gospel, and profess CHRIST to be the only sin-offering will be disowned by him, on this same account of neglecting this only means of salvation. For, though they attend upon the administration of his word read and preached ; and partake of the sacraments instituted by CHRIST himself, he will pronounce this dreadful sentence upon them, *depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity ;* because, whatever they profess, they do not make peace with GOD, through and by his Son JESUS CHRIST.

The cause of this may be thus accounted for. It is difficult to convince such men of their error, or that they despise CHRIST's sacrifice. They readily acknowledge the sinfulness of any breach of GOD's commandments, whereof their consciences accuse them, and shall lament their crime, and condemn their own ingratitude towards their maker ; but they shall be so far from being convinced of their guilt

of the sin of *unbelief*; that, being puffed up with a good opinion of their own merit, they laugh at such an accusation. Hence it is, that so few depend upon CHRIST's righteousness and sacrifice of himself; because they cannot be brought to a true sense of their unbelief.—Therefore when the Spirit comes, saith CHRIST, *he shall convince the world of sin*, not only of actual sin, but particularly of the sin of unbelief; *because they believed not in CHRIST*.—A delusion in which too many otherwise devout people die: as may be gathered from that dreadful sentence, *depart from me, I never knew you*, which shall be pronounced against them at the last day.—Therefore, as this is an affair so difficult to be inculcated with success, and of so great importance to our salvation, we cannot be too solicitous in its pursuit, nor too careful to avoid those temptations, which deceive and disappoint well-disposed christians in the application of the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST.

Let us consider how great the disappointment will be to sinners in the day of the Lord, when they are brought to acknowledge that they knew that there was no other name given unto men, whereby sinners could be saved, but the name of JESUS; and yet that they slighted and rejected him, to establish their own righteousness. If we have not begun to account and reckon with our maker, let us think on this immediately. Repent and believe that the passing of the sentence will be on this ground, Whether we have fled to CHRIST, and made use of his sacrifice, or not? It would be an irreparable disappointment to meet with a *Depart from me*, on this ground; because there was some conviction, that this was the only sacrifice and sin-offering, that takes away sin, and yet, it was not made use of, nor made the ground of our peace with God.

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What is it then to make use of this offering? we cannot explain it better than from the typical sacrifices under the law.

It implies a thorough conviction of man's liability to the justice of GOD for sin, and an utter inability in ourselves, and an utter emptiness and impotency in all other means to satisfy for sin; thus they, that brought the sacrifice to the priest, laid their hand on the head of the beast, by way of acknowledgement, that death was their due: so then to have a lively sense of the due desert of sin, that is, to have the sentence of death carried about in our bosom; to have a thorough conviction of the emptiness of all other means of relief, is requisite to the right improvement of CHRIST's offering.

It implies that we have respect to the institution and ordinance of GOD, appointing this sacrifice to be the means of our redemption. Thus in the sacrifices, that were offered for sin, under the old law, there was respect had to GOD's covenant; wherein were not only promises relating to external purifications, and admission to church-privileges, but promises also relating to inward cleansing, and to the pardon of sins, which was the great end of those sacrifices: and the looking unto the institution of this sacrifice, is the ground that leads us to know the end of CHRIST's sufferings, and is a warrant for our faith in the improvement thereof; being the only sacrifice that expiates sin, and holds off wrath: and if these two things be not carried with us in the use of this sacrifice; viz. the conviction of sin, and the liability to wrath, and GOD's institution and appointment of this sacrifice to take away sin, and to avert wrath; our using of it will be vain, our hopes vain, and our faith vain also; for such a use is no better than will-worship; and setting up our own righteousness instead of the righteousness of CHRIST our only Saviour.

It implies also, That when a sinner is walking under the sense of his sin, and the emptiness and impotency of all other things to remove sin and wrath; there must be a looking unto the worth of CHRIST's sufferings and sacrifice appointed to take away sin, and to preserve from wrath; and the soul's actual applying of his offering to itself; as we may see in the several sacrifices appointed, under the law, for the cleansing away several sins; particularly in that of the *Scape-goat*, on whose head the priest, for the people, laid his hands. In which was implied, not only their acknowledgement of sin, and of their deserving death, and of GOD's appointment of that to be a figurative offering for the typical taking away of sin; but these two things were further implied, (1.) That they did take the burthen of their sins, which neither they themselves, nor any other could bear, and laid it on CHRIST their surety, who stands in our room and stead to satisfy for our debts to GOD. So that we have no other answer to any accusation for sin but this: the surety we have betaken ourselves to, and placed in our stead, will pay this debt and answer for it.

When we have thus betaken ourselves to CHRIST and to his sacrifice, we must shew our faith by acquiescing in, and resting upon it alone for obtaining of our pardon. Which was also implied in the people's laying their hands, by the priest, on the head of the sacrifice: for, as this act was an open confession that they were not able of themselves to please and to satisfy GOD, nor by any other ways or means; so it was a declaration, that, according to GOD's covenant, they expected absolution from their transgressions through that sacrifice; and that though they could not satisfy by themselves, yet they had faith in GOD's covenant, that the sacrifice they offered would typically satisfy him.—Thus the believer draws the conclusion from CHRIST's sacrifice, according

according to the terms of the covenant, that he hath absolution, rests upon and acquiesces in it; which act of faith is called *trusting* and *confiding* in CHRIST, who hath promise to put none away that come unto him.

If it be so difficult and yet so absolutely necessary to make use of CHRIST, and especially in his offering up of himself for the sins of his people, see that we walk tenderly in this matter, that this sacrifice be not despised nor neglected; otherwise sin will lie still at our door. And here I address myself to three sorts of people:

(1.) To those who imagine they can make their peace with GOD without the mediation of a Redeemer. Of this sort some are utterly careless how their peace be made, or whether it be made or not: they hope for it, and doubt not of attaining it; but can give no account whether they shall come at it or not, and are very indifferent how to find the way. Others presume that GOD loves them, because they are in love with themselves: they don't deny their sin; but presume that GOD will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss. They are sure that GOD loves them; but they can alledge no ground for it. Others think GOD is merciful, and thence infer that they shall be pardoned; not reflecting that the Deity cannot shew mercy to the prejudice of his justice, which must be satisfied; but ignorantly supposing that GOD would have extended his mercy to sinful man, had CHRIST never died for us sinners.

(2) To those who take the legal way to reconcile themselves to GOD. They readily confess their own sinful state, and that no unclean thing can enter into the kingdom of heaven: but they trust in some excuse or atonement of their own invention. Sometimes they trust that their lives are not so culpable as other people's; and then conclude, that, if they should be adjudged to hell, they think that few will go to hea-

ven. They extol the rectitude of their own actions and general deportment : they appeal to heaven in the words of the Pharisee, *Lord, I thank thee I am not as other men are, nor like this publican.* Because they abstain from drunkenness and oppression ; because they neither curse nor swear ; and because they are not as prophane as some others, they are puffed up with self-conceit : or, they will do many duties, upon which they rest, and whereof they are ready to boast with that same Pharisee who proclaimed his own merit ; *I fast*, said he, *twice a week, I give tythes of all I possess.* If any duty be performed, or any good be done by them, they are ready to trust to it—But especially, if there be an inward work, a liberty or motion of the affection in prayer ; some convictions sharper at one time than another at hearing the word ; or any sort of repenting and sadness for sin, &c. they stop here, thinking these will do their work. This is a stumbling block on which many professors dash and perish ; because they rest on external duties.

(3) To those, who though they do not altogether neglect and despise CHRIST himself, despise and neglect his offering, as if they were minded to make use of himself, but not of his sacrifice ; like him who came to CHRIST and asked him, *what he should do to inherit eternal life* : and yet wanted to get to heaven by his own righteousness.—This is exceeding deceitful ; and therefore it requires the greater caution not to be deceived by it : for a man may come to CHRIST, as GOD, for pardon of sin, and may intercede for pardon from him ; but not for his sake, or on his account : for there is a great difference between making CHRIST the object of our worship, and making use of him as our mediator. Thus there are many who pray to CHRIST as GOD, and seek pardon of sin from him, who never pray to obtain pardon by virtue of his offering or sacrifice. People may also desire help
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from CHRIST, to enable them to do duties, whereby to work out their own salvation, and to make peace with GOD, without endeavouring to make their peace with GOD by applying the offering and righteousness of CHRIST: without which no prayers or offerings can find admission to the throne of divine grace; because their expectations are founded upon will-worship and the works of the Law, and not upon the means of salvation established by the Death of the Son of GOD made man.

As it must be satisfactory to know how to practise this great and necessary duty, we will examine into the evidences, which may give us some clear ideas, when we are making use of CHRIST's righteousness in a right way.

Observe: They that truly make use of CHRIST's offering hath not only been brought to see their necessity to use it, but to discover their natural proneness and readiness to mistake it, and to rest upon other things, besides CHRIST's sacrifice for the remission of sins: whereas they who do not rightly make use of it, though they may see their sin, and so their need of it; yet they see not, neither will they acknowledge the tendency, proneness, and inclination of their hearts to rest upon some other thing beside it.—St. Paul, before his conversion, studied, as he thought, all the righteousness of the law, and, no doubt, offered sacrifices, which implied an acknowledgement of sin; and was so well satisfied of having done all that was required of him, that he says, *Touching the righteousness of the law, I was blameless*; imagining that the more sacrifices he offered, the more righteous he was, and that he had nothing more to do for the purchase of his peace with GOD; tho' at the same time he was seeing for the fountain in himself. Therefore, being converted, he counts all these *to be loss*; no longer leaning on his own works, or making them any ground of his peace with GOD, or of his justification

tion before him ; and betakes himself, as all Christians ought to do, only to CHRIST's righteousness.

They that aim to make use of CHRIST's offering and righteousness ; not only their sins will be an exercise to them, how to get over them to CHRIST ; but it will be their exercise also, how to get over their graces and duties to him. For, it is no small difficulty to persuade nature, that has been busy in well-doing all day, that she must account all those doings but loss in the evening : and that she must renounce all boasting of it, and of its merit towards obtaining the peace of GOD.

Such as are sincere in the use of CHRIST's sacrifice will be exercised and disquieted, when the duty is done, till there be, for acceptance, a staying and resting on the righteousness of CHRIST. Their minds never rest upon duties, they push forward to perfection, till they shall be found in CHRIST, trusting not in their own, but in his righteousness.

They, that are sincere in applying of CHRIST, and his sacrifice, are afraid of mistaking this offering of CHRIST ; and that some other thing be put in its stead, and that CHRIST should be misunderstood or neglected. They will not only fear, least they sin, and come short in the suitable performance of such a duty, and least they fall under wrath : but there will be also fear and jealousy, lest by unbelief and selfishness they should go wrong in the applying of CHRIST and of his sacrifice. Such a one was the poor man, who pray'd to CHRIST, *Lord, I believe ; help thou mine unbelief.*

Another mark of sincerity in the application of CHRIST's offering of himself is not only to see ourselves sinners ; but to carry along with us the discovery of the depravity of every thing, that is best in us. It is nothing to discover sin in some outward actions, and in that, which is directly contrary to GOD's law ; but it is extraordinary difficult to find
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out sin in our very best things; such as faith in GOD; love of him, and in our ends in holy duties. A legal man may readily confess, that he sins in every thing: but he covers all with this, that his heart is right towards GOD, or that he is acting for a good end. On the contrary, a true believer sees all his good so faulty, that it is tasteless to him: he never has any thing to rest on, or that he can trust to carry his burthen, till he lays hold on the sacrifice of CHRIST.

A farther evidence of the right use of CHRIST's offering and sacrifice appears by the esteem we have for it: which makes us venture heaven and our eternal salvation upon it. CHRIST's stepping in and engaging to do that for sinners, which neither they themselves, nor any other person, or thing could do, gives them fresh comfort and hopes; that they shall live *by the faith of the son of GOD, who loved them, and gave himself for them.*

Lastly, To apply the sacrifice and offering of CHRIST rightly, is a matter of the greatest difficulty, and requires much wrestling in the spirit, before we can trust it aright. Many breath after it; and yet dont attain to that, which they would be at in it. They know not well how to apply it to their satisfaction, or how to fix and exercise their faith on it: and when it comes to actual believing, and to the acting of their faith, they find it to be like a smooth and slippery stone, on which they cannot easily stand. The believer sees that there is such hazard to go wrong, and that it is so difficult to be right, even to make the heart submit to the way of faith, and to abide by it only, that he is content to suffer the loss of all things, if he may be right there; *to count all things but dung, that he may win CHRIST, and that he may be found in him,* Philip. iii. But the man that rests on his own righteousness, let what will be a difficulty to him, faith is no difficulty
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to him. He may sometimes doubt of his salvation; but he thinks that he is always increasing his faith.

Thus we may see and understand the necessity of making use of the sacrifice of CHRIST for sin; and how warily and cautiously it should be done, that we may steer a strait course between gross prophaness and presumption, either of which will ruin and destroy the soul.

THE PRAYER.

O LORD, Lamb of GOD, who didst humble thyself in thy birth, in thy obedience to the law, in thy sufferings, which thou felt in the infirmities of the flesh, from the indignities of the world, the temptations of the devil, and the inward operations of the mind; and didst, at last, humble thyself to death, even the death of the cross, to take away the sins of the world, triumphing over sin, satan, death, and the grave: I arraign and condemn myself as guilty of thy blood, and accessory to thy cruel death, by having so large a share in that sin, which required so great an atonement as the sacrifice of thy precious body and blood. But I believe that I shall, by the sacrifice of thy life, be made whole and cleansed from all sin and impurity, let it be ever so great. Grant, therefore, gracious Lord! that I may be numbered with thine elect, and triumph with thee over all temptations, and receive the benefit of thy sufferings. And may that death of the Son of GOD, which reconciles enemies to their maker, redeem me from the curse, and make my peace, and revive my drooping soul, and warm my heart with love for my dying Lord, through whose mediation and righteousness alone I have hope and assurance of my mercy, pardon, and salvation from GOD the Father. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

Of the Designs and blessed ENDS of CHRIST'S Humiliation.

IT is not conceivable that CHRIST, who was the only begotten Son of GOD, would so stupendously abase himself, by stooping from the bosom of his father, to the state of the dead, if there had not been some excellent and glorious thing in his eye; the attainment whereof might give him a content and satisfaction equivalent to all the sorrows and abasements he endured for it. Thus it was expressed by the prophet *Isaiah*, *He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*: signifying that CHRIST would not shed his blood in vain, upon a hazard; that his design should not miscarry; but that he should certainly see the ends accomplished, for which he suffered.

Let us therefore enquire into the principal designs and ends of CHRIST'S humiliation: and we shall find that as the sprinkling of blood in the legal sacrifices under the old covenant, was done for some considerable uses or ends; so the precious blood of the testator and surety of the new testament is shed for four weighty uses or ends also.

(1) The typical blood was shed and applied to deliver from danger; for thus it is written, *The blood [sprinkled upon the door-posts of the Hebrews] shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you: and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I [the Lord GOD] smite the land of Egypt.*

The shedding of the blood of CHRIST was the completion of this type: for it was shed to deliver his people from danger, even from that wrath, which

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which burns down to the pit of hell, as it is written by the apostle to the *Thessalonians*, *JESUS who delivered us from the wrath to come*, 1 Epist. i. 10. A wrath, that shall certainly and inevitably come upon sinners. As sure as the night follows the day, as sure as the winter follows the summer, so shall *wrath* follow sin, and the pleasures thereof: a wrath that has no end, but shall still be coming when millions of ages and years shall be past and gone.

Such is the *wrath to come*, from which *JESUS* has delivered us by his death. For that was the price laid down for our redemption from the wrath of the terrible *GOD*. *Much more then being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him*; not through any necessity or force, but freely, fully, distinguishingly and wonderfully.

Freely by his own voluntary interposition between the justice and wrath of *GOD* and sinful man, and by his voluntary taking upon himself the mediatorial office, moved thereto by his own bowels of compassion which yearned over his elect in their misery, as a pious writer expresses it. Man had offended and was subject to the eternal loss of heaven, without being able to make an atonement for his sin. *CHRIST* offers himself to redeem both lost man and his inheritance: man to be his own inheritance, and heaven to be man's inheritance. See Eph. i. 10. compared with 1 Pet. j. 4. And this was done, when none made supplication to him.—No fighting of the prisoners came before him. He designed it for us before we had a being; and when the purposes of his grace were come to their maturity, then did he freely lay out the infinite treasures of his blood to purchase our deliverance from wrath.

This deliverance was full, not a reprieve, but *a salvation to as many as obey him*. Heb. v. 9. Not a mitigation or abatement of the rigour or severity of the sentence passed upon man at his fall; but a rescue

rescue of his people fully from all degrees of wrath. So that *there is no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST*, Rom. viii. 1. All the wrath of GOD to the last drop was squeezed out into that bitter cup, which CHRIST drank upon the cross.

It was also a special and distinguishing deliverance, not common to all, but peculiar to some. For, as St. Paul writes to the *Corinthians*, *Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called*, &c. 1 Epist. i. 26.

This salvation is likewise so wonderful, that it is not to be described in its full extent. Who can fathom the wonder or mystery of such a project of grace being contrived by an offended deity, who had power to punish the whole race of mankind everlastingly? How wonderfully does it appear that this salvation was designed for man, and not for angels, who are by creation more excellent than us? And what surpasseth all conception, is, that the Son of GOD should in his own person, undertake this great and glorious design; that he should effect it in such a way, by taking our nature, and suffering the penalty of the law, and that then our salvation should be wrought out, and our deliverance finished, when the Redeemer and his design appeared both to be lost and perished.

Therefore, if CHRIST by his death delivered us from the wrath to come, it must be most ungrateful and disingenuous for those, who have obtained so great and free a deliverance, to repine and grudge at those light afflictions they suffer, for a moment, on CHRIST'S account, in this world. These sufferings are far short of those our Redeemer suffered for our deliverance; neither is there any thing we can suffer for CHRIST, in this world, comparable to *the wrath to come*, which we could not have escaped

caped had he not rescued us from it by the price of his most precious blood.

Compare the wrath of man to the wrath of that GOD, who is a *consuming fire*. Compare the sufferings of the body and mind here, to the tortures of a soul and body in hell; *whose worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched*. Compare time with eternity; the troubles of a few years, to that wrath, which hath no end, and allows not a moment's intermission, ease, or mitigation. And we shall soon understand that scripture, and take the advice of *John the Baptist*, who said to the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, *O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come: Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance*.

This awakens us with a desire to know how far we can be assured of our own deliverance from the wrath to come. A doubt of this kind will imbitter any enjoyment in this world. There can be no satisfaction of mind possessed with such a thought as this, *What if I am reserved for the wrath to come!* This would be as the hand-writing upon the wall in the midst of *Belteshazzar's* feast. Therefore

Let us examine ourselves: and if we find that JESUS has delivered us from sin, the cause of wrath, we may safely conclude that he has delivered us from the wrath of GOD, which is the effect and fruit of sin. The name of JESUS was imposed on him, because he was *to save his people from their sins*. A man is exposed to *wrath to come*, so long as he lies under the dominion of sin; and when he is delivered from the guilt and power of sin, he is certainly delivered from the danger of the wrath to come. Where sin is not imputed, wrath is not threatned.

A soul, which sets an inestimable value on JESUS CHRIST, and becomes endeared to him upon account of that inexpressible grace manifested in the

redemption, he has wrought for man, may hope that she hath a good share in it, and is not far from the kingdom of GOD.

But to these tokens we must add this, namely, a disposition and readiness of mind to do, or to endure any thing for CHRIST's sake, upon the account of this deliverance from the wrath to come: *we must walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work: and be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.*

(2) The typical blood was shed to make an atonement between GOD and the people, as we read in *Leviticus iv. 20.* *He shall do with the bullock, as he did with the bullock for a sin-offering; so shall he do with this; and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.* Where we learn that by the blood of the bullock, all whose efficacy stood in its relation near to the blood of CHRIST, signified and shadowed by it, the people, for whom it was shed, should be reconciled to GOD, by the expiation and remission of their sins. And what was thus figuratively performed was really designed and accomplished by JESUS CHRIST's sacrifice of his own blood, as it is written, *when we were enemies we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his Son, who is thereby become the propitiation for our sins, and made a complete satisfaction to GOD, for the wrong man had done to him.*

Here we are taught that CHRIST reconciles GOD and man by his death; making satisfaction to the justice of GOD for our sins. *The chastisement of our peace; he being chastised to procure our sins by removal of our sins; we by his stripes are healed.* And reparation being thus made, the enmity between GOD and man cealeth.

This reconciliation is made first, by the oblation of CHRIST; the free offering of himself, which was the

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the price, that procured it; and so we were virtually or meritoriously reconciled: secondly, by the *application* of CHRIST and his benefits to us through faith: by which we are actually reconciled. Thirdly, by the *virtual continuation* of the sacrifice of CHRIST in heaven, by his powerful and eternal *intercession*: and thus our state of reconciliation is confirmed, and all future breaches prevented, wherefore all depends upon the death of CHRIST. For had not CHRIST died, his death could never be applied to us, nor pleaded for us in heaven.

If we enquire why this reconciliation was made by the death of CHRIST, rather than any other way; it is answered, because there was no other way for it to be done: and if GOD could have *reconciled* us, as much, by any other way; yet he could not have obliged us so much by doing it in any other way, as he hath by doing it in this way. It is certain, that none but he, who was GOD manifest in our flesh could offer a sacrifice of sufficient value to make GOD amends for the wrong done him by one sin, much less for the sins of the whole world. Nor can it be conceived how GOD, who had peremptorily threatened death for sin, could readmit us into favour without full satisfaction. Had he inclined to mercy, his justice would have kept him from it. Otherwise his justice must have been eclipsed, whilst his mercy shined. But allow that infinite wisdom might have found out another means of reconciling us; yet that means could not be so obligatory, as this way of reconciliation by the death of his own Son.

This reconciliation, however will not be effectual for the good ends proposed, unless we comply with certain articles and conditions; upon the performance whereof, and not before, it actually becomes ours, and without which, the breach between us
and

and GOD continues: notwithstanding all that CHRIST hath done and suffered.

These articles and conditions are *Repentance* and *Faith*. In the first we lay down arms against GOD before he admits us into a state of peace and favour; in the other we accept CHRIST and pardon through him, with a thankful heart, yielding ourselves up to his government.—*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our GOD for he will abundantly pardon. For, being justified by faith we have peace with GOD.*

It ill becomes the ideas we have of GOD to think that he, the holy one, that inhabiteth eternity, could ever acknowledge, as a favourite and friend, the man that goes on perversly and impenitently in the way of sin; not so much as owning, or once bewailing the wrong he hath done him, with full purpose of amendment; or that he could receive into amity one that flights and rejects the Lord JESUS, who purchased pardon and peace for sinners by shedding his own precious blood.—But if there be any poor soul that faith in his heart, It repents me that I have sinned, and done evil in the sight of GOD; and is sincerely willing to come to CHRIST upon gospel-terms, he shall have that peace, which passeth all understanding.

This peace is the reconciliation procured by JESUS CHRIST for broken-hearted believers. It is firm and not to be moved: *mountains may depart, and hills be removed, but the covenant of this peace cannot be removed.* Isai. liv. 10. It is the fountain out of which all our comforts flow; according to that of *Eliphaz to Job, Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee.* All spiritual and temporal mercies flow into our bosoms, when once we are reconciled to GOD.

We

We may collect several useful improvements from this doctrine. The extraordinary means of reconciliation should give us a true sense of the horrible evil of sin, and of the dreadful breach made between man and his maker, which required the death of GOD the Son to make it up. It should also convince us of the sad state of those, who are not comprized in the articles of peace with GOD. For if GOD be a man's enemy, it will avail him nothing to be supported by all the world. See *Deut.* xxxii. 40, 41, 42. He cannot be escaped; *Pf.* cxxxix. 10. and he lives for ever to avenge himself upon his enemies.

Therefore, if we believe that CHRIST died to reconcile us to GOD, let us be diligent to clear up in our own souls our interest in this reconciliation. If CHRIST thought it worth his blood to purchase it; it is worth our care and pains to clear it up to our souls; to be cautious not to make new breaches, and to say unto GOD, seeing thou hast given such a deliverance as this, we will keep thy commandments. He that makes not peace with GOD is an enemy to his own soul.

(3) The blood of the sacrifices under the *Mosaic* dispensation, was intended to purify persons from ceremonial pollutions; as we learn from *Levit.* xiv. 6, 7. where it is directed, that *he shall dip the cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop, with the living bird, in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running-water, and he shall sprinkle upon him, that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times; and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.*

Here we learn that the blood of CHRIST was shed for the sanctification of his people. As the typical blood was shed to purify them that were unclean, so was the blood of CHRIST shed to purge away the sins of his people: CHRIST gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. Which doctrine

of the Apostle to the *Ephesians* is conformable to what CHRIST himself had told us, *For their sakes I sanctify myself* [consecrate or devote myself to death] *that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* John xvii. 19.—But here it is proper to observe for the better understanding of this text, that there is a two-fold evil in sin, the *guilt* of it, and the *pollution* of it. Now justification cures the former, sanctification the latter; yet both justification and sanctification flow unto sinners out of the death of CHRIST. For, though it is proper to say, the Spirit sanctifies; yet it is certain, it was the blood of CHRIST, that procured for us the spirit of sanctification. Had not CHRIST died and ascended into heaven, there would have been no Holy Ghost to sanctify us.

Therefore the Spirit is said to *come in his name, and to take of his, and shew it unto us.* And he came both by *blood and water*, 1 John v. 6. By blood, to wash away the guilt: by water to purify from the filth of sin.

From the premises we may collect the enormous pollution of sin; which could be cleansed away by no other means, than the blood of CHRIST. And here also we are astonished with the unbounded love of our Saviour, who so loved his people, that he *washed them from sin in his own blood*, the blood of GOD; not with a little quantity, but with all his blood, even to the last drop, that was let out of his side by a spear.

(4) With blood also the covenant of GOD, with the people was *ratified*. MOSES took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, *Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you, concerning all these words*, Exod. xxiv. 8. Even so CHRIST died to sanctify his people: he also died to confirm the new covenant. *This, says he, is the new testament in my blood*, Matt. xxvi. 28. i. e. ratified and confirmed by my blood.

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Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator, *Heb. ix. 16.* So that now all the benefits and blessings, bequeathed to believers in the last will and testament of CHRIST, are sufficiently and effectually confirmed and secured to them by his death, freely and voluntarily suffered by him for our sakes.

By this he giveth us all *temporal* good things (*Matt. vi. 33.*) their comfort and blessing, though not the possession of much. See *2 Cor. vi. 10.* By this he giveth all spiritual good things; as *Remission* of sins and acceptation with GOD, which are contained in justification; *Rom. iii. 24, &c.* *Sanctification* of nature, *1 Cor. i. 30.* *Adoption* into the family of GOD, *Gal. iii. 26.* The ministry of Angels, *Heb. i. 14.* and interest in all the promises, *2 Pet. i. 4.*

All eternal good things, such as heaven, glory, and life eternal. See *Rom. viii. 10, 11.* Such are the real blessings and benefits bequeathed, conveyed, ratified, and confirmed to believers by the death of CHRIST.

Then remember that CHRIST died not only principally to confirm the testament by his blood, as witness to the truth of those things; but his death ratified it, as the death of a testator, which makes the *New Testament* in his blood irrevocable. Remember also, that the executorship of this will and testament is not committed to the trust and performance of any person; but as CHRIST died to put it in force, so he lives again to be the executor of his own will; and therefore we are informed in *Rev. i. 18.* that all power to fulfill his will is in his own hands.

If we believe that CHRIST died to confirm the new testament, in which such blessings and benefits bequeathed to believers, we are certainly concerned to prove the will of our crucified JESUS, so far

as to clear our title to the mercies contained in this blessed testament, by examining, Whether we are espoused to CHRIST? whether we have forsaken all for him? whether we are ready to take up his cross and follow him in meekness, patience, and long-suffering? whether we are faithful to him, as our king, and obedient to him as our head and husband? If we can answer in the affirmative to these particulars, then we may be confident that we are interested, as covenant-relations, in the benefits and blessings of CHRIST's last will and testament.—Again: are we his spiritual seed, or his children by regeneration, and born of the spirit? Do we endeavour to imitate CHRIST in holiness? Do we find a reverential fear of CHRIST carrying us to obey him in all things? are we led by the spirit of CHRIST? then *we are the sons of GOD*, Rom. viii. 14. And have we the spirit of *Adoption* enabling us to cry *Abba, Father*? i. e. helping us in a gracious manner, with reverence mixed with filial confidence, to open our hearts spiritually to our Father on all occasions? if so, we are children; and if children, we are heirs to those rich legacies bequeathed in his last will and testament.

Here the love of CHRIST demands our greatest admiration. A love! which has entailed upon believers such an inheritance, that no man can take from us, and will make us happy both in this world and in the next. These are the mercies, with which his love has been pregnant from all eternity, and were brought forth by his death and passion. Before this love let all the saints fall down astonished, humbly professing that they owe themselves and all they enjoy, or shall be worth, to this eternal love of our Saviour. And let us take care that we depart not from the truth; but walk as becomes persons, for whom CHRIST has vouchsafed to do such great things; comforting ourselves with our spiri-

tual privileges, under affliction and adversity, and rejoicing that we are found worthy to suffer with him, whilst the children of this world are given up to the lusts of the flesh, to the lust of the eyes, and to the pride of life.

THE PRAYER.

ALmighty and everlasting GOD, who of thy tender mercy towards mankind hast sent thy Son JESUS CHRIST to take upon him the nature of men, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility: mercifully grant that I may follow the example of his patience, and that as I am baptized into his death; so by continually mortifying my corrupt affections, I may be buried with him, and through the grave and gate of death I may pass to a joyful resurrection, for his merits who died and was buried, and rose again for me and all mankind, the same thy Son JESUS CHRIST my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

CHAP. V.

Of CHRIST's Exaltation. I. Of his Resurrection. II. Of his Ascension. III. Of his Seat in Heaven. IV. Of his coming to Judgment.

THough it was necessary for our salvation that CHRIST should thus be *humbled*; yet that great work could not be complete without his *Exaltation*. For, as it was not enough for the sacrifice to be slain *without*, and his blood left there; but,

but, after it was shed without, it must be carried *within* the veil, into the holy of holies, before the Lord : so it was not sufficient for CHRIST to shed his blood on earth, except he should carry it into heaven before the Lord, and there, as our *complete and perfect priest*, perform his *intercession* for us.

This *exaltation* was also required for the glory of God the Father ; as it is written— CHRIST JESUS *being in the form of GOD thought it no robbery to be equal with GOD : but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore GOD hath also highly exalted him and given him a name, which is above every name : that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that JESUS CHRIST is the Lord, to the glory of GOD the Father, Philip. ii. 5, &c.*

As the divine nature of JESUS CHRIST could not receive any advancement ; for the Son of GOD never ceased to be the most High. So this singular exaltation respects only his human nature ; and was done to him, as a common person, and as the head, and representative, of all believers in this, as well as in all his other works : GOD therein shewing, what, in due time, he intends to do with the persons of his elect, after they have travelled with CHRIST through the crosses of this world.

Whatever the almighty Father intended to do *in* us, and *for* us, he hath done it *to* the person of JESUS CHRIST our representative, all which may be clearly seen in the scriptures, where the *resurrection, ascension, session* of CHRIST at the right hand of GOD the Father, and his returning to *judge* the world, are particularly revealed.

He arose from the dead as a common person; that we should have communion and fellowship with him in his Resurrection. *Colos. iii. 1.*

He ascended into heaven, as a common person; *Eph. ii. 6.* And sits at the right hand of God the Father as a common person, *ibid.* but as our representative. When he shall come again to judge the world, the saints also shall come with him, *Zech. xiv. 6.*

SECTION I.

FIRST, then, we will treat of CHRIST's *Resurrection*. The first intelligence of this part of the work of our redemption was published by the angel, who so frightened the soldiers, that they became as dead men; rolled away the stone, which closed the sepulchre of JESUS crucified, and was the heavenly herald that proclaimed his resurrection to the women, whose love of CHRIST had drawn them to visit the place of his burial. The angel perceiving the despondency of the pious women encouraged them immediately with this declaration, *He is not here; for he is risen*, as he said: *come see the place where the Lord lay.*

In which scripture we are taught “ That the Lord
“ JESUS CHRIST, by the almighty power of his
“ own Godhead, revived and rose from the dead,
“ to the terror and confusion of his enemies, and
“ to the unspeakable consolation and joy of be-
“ lievers.”

The fact is proved by many infallible evidences, *Acts i. 3.* You have read the testimony of the angel from heaven, who told the two *Maries* that *he is risen*; and we cannot doubt of the veracity of such an evidence. And as for the testimonies of men, we have many; of some who were eye-witnesses of this truth, to whom JESUS shewed himself alive, for the space of forty days, after his resurrection, by nine solemn apparitions to them. Sometimes five
hundred

hundred brethren saw him at once, 1 Cor. xv. 6. And these were men esteemed for their veracity and holiness; who durst not deceive, and who confirmed their testimony with their own blood.

If it were not so, then should christians, of all men, be most miserable; the gospel would be vain; our hopes of a blessed immortality would be vain also: for on this truth hangs the whole weight of our faith, hope, and salvation. If this were not so the holy and divine inspired writers would be found *false witnesses*, and we all had remained *in our sins*, and must have perished everlastingly. See 1 Cor. xv. 14—17. For as the price of our redemption was not completely and fully paid till CHRIST had rose from the dead; so our justification is truly ascribed to his resurrection, Rom. iv. 25. Therefore had CHRIST continued always in the state of the dead, he could not have completely satisfied; and all the types and predictions of his resurrection would have been insignificant and suspected.

Besides, had not CHRIST risen from the dead, he could not have possessed that glory, which was promised him before the world was, on account of his death and sufferings, and which he now enjoys. *For to this end CHRIST died and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*, (Rom. xiv. 19.) to apply most effectually the benefits and virtues of his blood to us; which could not have been done, but in this state of dominion and glorious advancement.

Having, therefore, no doubt of the truth of this divine mystery, let us improve this faith by enquiring into the nature and manner of CHRIST's resurrection.

He rose with awful majesty: *Behold, at the time CHRIST quitted the grave, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightening, and his*

raiment as white as snow : and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. Thus JESUS, who had been used with so much scorn, contempt and ignominy by his enemies triumphed over death and the grave, and marched out with a pomp and majesty becoming so great a conqueror.

This triumph was also decorated with the resurrection of many saints ; of whom the scripture speaks in these words, *The graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints, which slept, arose, and came out of the graves, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many,* Mat. xxvii. 52, 53. In which act of GOD'S power we see not only the ornaments of CHRIST'S triumph in his resurrection from the dead ; but we have a sample of our own resurrection at the last day.

We must likewise observe, that it was by the power of his own Godhead, that CHRIST quickened and raised himself ; and that it was by virtue of his resurrection, that they, who accompanied him from their respective graves, were raised up.

The angel did only proclaim this stupendous action by rolling away the stone, &c. CHRIST resumed his own life, according as he had foretold. *I lay down my life, that I may take it again,* John x. 18. So where we read, that he was put to death in the flesh and quickened by the spirit, we are to understand this spirit to be his godhead or divine nature, by which, and not the third person in the Trinity, he also offered himself up to GOD, when he died, *Heb. ix. 14.* compared with *1 Pet. iii. 18.* otherwise it could not be said to be his own act.

CHRIST thus became the *first-born from the dead,* Coloss. i. 18. It is true, that *Lazarus* and others had been raised from the dead. But they were all raised not by their own power, but by CHRIST, who is the resurrection and the life. Besides, all those testimonies of CHRIST'S power died again in the

the course of nature ; but CHRIST dieth no more, *death hath no more dominion over him.* He was the first, who by his own power opened the womb of the earth ; the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

He also rose as a common person, became the first fruits of them that slept, *1 Cor. xv. 20.* representing and comprehending all the elect or *children of the resurrection*, *Eph. ii. 6.* where we are said to be risen with, or in him. As in Adam, our common father, *all die*, as the branches die in the death of the root, so in CHRIST, our common Saviour, we shall *all be made alive*, or raised from death ; because he is the head, root and representative of all his elect seed.

Hence we learn that this resurrection of CHRIST had these happy influences upon the resurrection of the saints.

It is the *meritorious* cause of the saint's resurrection, because it completes his satisfaction and finishes his payment. So that our justification is properly assigned to it. By this resurrection the bond was cancelled and an acquittance received. And had this not been done we had still been in our sins, and our guilt had been still a bar to our happy resurrection. Whereas, the price being paid in CHRIST's death, which payment was finished when he rose again ; and the discharge then received for us, there is nothing lies in bar against our resurrection to eternal life, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

It is likewise the *efficient* cause of our resurrection. When the time shall come for the general resurrection of the dead, the saints shall be raised out of the dust by CHRIST their head, because *our life is hid with CHRIST in GOD*, *Coloss. iii. 3.*—Again ; *If CHRIST be in you*, saith the apostle to the Romans,

the body indeed is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness: i. e. Though we are really united to CHRIST by the spirit, yet our bodies must die, as well as other mens; but our souls, that depart in the faith, shall be presently, upon our dissolution, swallowed up in life. *But if the spirit of him, that raised up JESUS from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up CHRIST from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you: or though our bodies must die, according to the law of nature, yet they shall live again in the resurrection, by virtue of the spirit of CHRIST, which dwelleth in believers, and is the bond of our mystical union with him our head. For the saints are not to be raised, as others are, by a mere word of power, but by the spirit of life dwelling in CHRIST their head.*

Here also we find a sample of our resurrection. The resurrection of CHRIST requires imitation and conformity. *He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* For, as CHRIST's body was raised substantially and numerically the same, so will ours. His body was raised first, so will ours, that die in the Lord, be raised before the rest of the dead. His human body was wonderfully improved and exalted by the resurrection, so will ours. His body was raised to be glorified, so will ours. *This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; and the dead in CHRIST shall rise first.* The bodies, which have been sown in weakness and dishonour, shall be raised in strength and glory; and those, which have been sown natural bodies, shall be raised spiritual bodies; i. e. without spot, blemish, and any natural necessities.

The members that are now deformed or defective will, in that day, be restored to their perfect being and beauty. And what will be the greatest

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perfection of all, they, from thenceforth shall be free from the law of mortality ; *they can die no more.* See *Luke* xx. 35, 36.

In fine, as CHRIST's body was raised from the dead to be glorified and crowned with honour, so shall the bodies of the saints be raised to partake of his glory, and to reign with him in eternal joy and gladness of heart. For in the morning of that day it will be said to them, *Arise, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust,* *Isai.* xxvi. 19.

The reunion of the soul and body will be attended with extreme joy, if we may judge from that affection there is now between them in their earthly state. The sympathy of the soul with the body, its care of it, and unwillingness to be separate from it, give us sensible ideas of the pleasure they will feel at their reunion, and persuade us that the soul cannot account itself completely happy, till its old dear companion and partner be restored to it. Therefore when this shall be effected, it will be a most comfortable meeting ; especially if we consider that they meet each other in a more perfect temper and state, than it was possible for them to enjoy upon earth. For the body is become *spiritual*, improved with the most amiable and desirable endowments, clear of all earthy faculties and burthens. The soul, on its part comes down immediately from GOD out of heaven, shining in its holiness and glory, to enable the body to *meet the Lord* in the clouds, and *even to be with the Lord*, to receive a full reward according to its deeds in the flesh, in the service it has performed to GOD in this world.

In such a view of our Saviour's resurrection, we learn, That death is fairly overcome, and swallowed up in victory. Had not CHRIST triumphed thus over death, he could not have escaped out of

the prison of the grave.—Death defies all the race of *Adam*; in *Adam* we all die: in CHRIST we are all made alive—None but CHRIST could combat this king of terrors, and conquer. He by the gate of death entered in the very den of this dragon, fought with it and conquered it in the grave, its own territories and dominions; and performing this for us, and in our names rising as our representative, every *Christian* may now triumph over death and the grave, as a vanquished enemy; as appears in that beautiful and soul-comforting apostrophe, *O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? thanks be to GOD, who hath given us the victory through our Lord JESUS CHRIST, 1 Cor. xv. 55.* A victory, which is made certain by the resurrection of CHRIST, virtually for us as our head; though not fully complete and general till it be utterly vanquished and destroyed at the resurrection of believers.—So that, till then, it will exercise some little power over, or keep the bodies of the saints, as well as of unbelievers, in the grave and in a state of separation from their souls; in which respect death is called *the last enemy, that is to be destroyed, 1 Cor. xv. 26.* But in that day of reunion of the soul and body, *will be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.*

Therefore our faith teacheth that *then*, and not till then, that conquest will be fully completed in our persons for ever; though it be already completed in CHRIST's.

Here we discover the duty and wisdom of the people of GOD to keep their bodies in subjection; to adorn them with good works; to preserve them spotless from the world, and to train them up in the service of GOD.

We are taught to *possess our bodies in sanctification and honour, and not to let those eyes to be now defiled with sin, by which we shall see GOD; nor our ears to be inlets*

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to vanity, with which we shall hear the hallelujahs of the heavenly choir. In a word, we must preserve our bodies from those sins, which defile it, (1 Cor. vi. 18.) if we hope to please GOD, for our bodies are intended to be the temples of GOD; and the apostle assures us, that *if any man defile the temple of GOD, him will GOD destroy*, 1 Cor. iii. 17.

Therefore, beware that no affection for the body draw the soul into temptation, and bring it under the power of sin. Yet, how many precious souls perish eternally for yielding to the momentary gratification of their bodies.—Let us rather imitate the holy resolution of those worthies, who *accepted not deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection*, Heb. xi. 35. They held fast by faith, and chose death, reproach, poverty, and pain for the sake of GOD; rather than life, honour, riches, and pleasure, which would bring them under the dominion of sin.—They would not expose their souls, to secure and gratify their bodies.

Again; if CHRIST be risen from the dead, in the character of a representative of all, that truly come unto him, we are all concerned to secure to ourselves an interest in CHRIST, and consequently in this blessed resurrection.—Take away the hope of this resurrection and we can find no consolation in our travels through the temptations and sufferings of this life. It is this certain hope that enables us to bear the burthens of life, and which supports us in the agonies of death.

To be sure of this great concern, we must be *regenerate*, brought forth in a new nature to GOD; for it is written, and we must believe, that *we are begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead*. CHRIST's resurrection is the ground work of our hope; and the *new birth* is our title or evidence of our interest in it. So that till our souls become partakers of the spiritual resurrection

tion from the death of sin, we can entertain no assurance that our bodies shall be partakers of that blessed resurrection to life. *Blessed and holy*, saith the Spirit, *is he that hath part in the first resurrection*, on such the second death *hath no power*, Rev. xx. 6. —Unregenerate souls cannot expect a comfortable reunion with their bodies. They shall rise at the sound of the angelic trumpet; but not to the same end, nor by the principle, as the saints shall rise. They to whom the spirit is now a principle of *sanctification*, to them he will be a principle of a joyful *resurrection*.

For, thus it is also written, *if we have been planted together in the likeness of CHRIST's death, we shall be also planted together in the likeness of his resurrection*. If we be dead with CHRIST, we shall live again by the life of CHRIST: which is as much as to say, If the power or mortifying influence of CHRIST's death hath been upon our hearts, killing their lusts, destroying their affections, and suppressing their passions and appetites to the creature, then the power of his life or resurrection shall come, (like animating dew) upon our dead withered bodies, to revive and raise them up to live with him in glory.

If our hearts and affections be now with CHRIST in heaven, our bodies, in due time, shall be there also, and conformed to his glorious body. *For our conversation*, saith the apostle, *is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*.

And we have this promise, that our labour shall not be in vain, *if we strive by any means to attain the resurrection of the dead*, Philip. iii. 11. If we have *done good* in the world, we have this hope and expectation, that we shall come forth of the grave *unto the resurrection of life*, John v. 29. Therefore attend to the apostolic exhortation, *my beloved brethren,*

ren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch, as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

THE PRAYER.

ALmighty GOD, who through thine only begotten Son JESUS CHRIST hast overcome death and opened unto man the gate of everlasting life ; I most humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special grace preventing me, thou dost put into my mind good desires ; so by thy continual help I may bring the same to good effect, through JESUS CHRIST, who with thee, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one GOD, world without end, *Amen.*

SECTION II.

Of the Ascension of CHRIST.

THIS is the second step of his exaltation. *He ascended into heaven*, that there, at the right hand of GOD the Father, he might dispatch all, that remained to be done for the completing of the salvation of his people.

This part of CHRIST's exaltation is fully and faithfully related by the evangelists : and the apostle to the *Ephesians* informs us particularly, as an undoubted truth, and a fundamental article of our faith, that *he who descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens.*

In which scripture we learn that the person, who thus ascended into heaven, is CHRIST, who, by taking the manhood into GOD, carried his humanity up to the Father, from whom his divine nature came forth into the world, for the work of our redemption. (See *John xvi. 28.*) For, as GOD, he
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is spiritually with us, even to the end of the world : but as man, *the heavens must contain him till the restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 21.

This ascension, CHRIST had called it a *leaving of the world*, John xvi. 28. and, to preserve the unity in all his actions for our redemption, it took place from the *mount Olivet* near to *Jerusalem*. From the very spot, where he began his last sorrowful tragedy, he ascended *above all heavens*, as the apostle words it, above the firmament and the heavens, which we see, and are made for the use of the sublunary world, into the most holy place, *within the veil*, into his father's house, John xiv. 2. to the very place where he was before, John vi. 62. even to the place of happiness and the throne of GOD, which is the bosom of the father, from whence he had descended to take upon him the work of our redemption.

CHRIST had it in his power to ascend up into heaven, as soon as he was risen from the dead; but he, who rose again for our justification, chose to continue upon earth for the space of *forty days*, that he might effectually confirm the reality of his resurrection, and *speak of the things that pertain to the kingdom of GOD*, or to settle all things for the good of his church. In this time he gave charge to the apostles concerning the discipline and order of his house or kingdom : because he intended that their acts should be rules to future churches.

The time for his ascending being come, this same JESUS CHRIST ascended, not purely to reassume his own primitive glory, but also as a public person, as a fore-runner, in our names, and upon our account. See *Heb. vi. 20*. For he went upon our business to GOD, as he had said, *I go before to prepare a place for you*, (John xiv. 2.) or to take possession of heaven in our names; all that ever entered heaven before him, having attained that happy place in his name and through the vir-
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tue of his merits ; he was the first that entered heaven directly, immediately, in his own name and upon his own account.

He also ascended in a *triumphant* manner, as *Daniel* had thus foretold. *Behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him.* Thus the author of the *Acts of the Apostles* informs us that he was taken up ; a cloud received him out of the sight of his disciples, and angels certified that he was thus taken up *into heaven*, and shall come again in the like triumphant manner, as he was seen go into heaven, *Acts* i. 9, 10, 11.

Had not CHRIST ascended, he could not have been our priest for ever to make *intercession* for us, without which office we could have no hope of reconciliation with GOD under our frequent relapses. We have no means to succour ourselves with, under the daily surprizes of sin, but this, that *if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins.*—He could not have convinced the world of his righteousness, and that he had made full satisfaction to GOD upon the cross : but CHRIST's going to the Father and returning hither no more sheweth, that GOD is fully content and satisfied both with his person and with his work.

Again ; had not CHRIST ascended, the *Comforter*, who was ordained to give us the great blessings of the spirit and ordinances *had not come*, *John* xvi. 7. He begins where CHRIST finished ; he takes of his, and shews it to us, *ver.* 14. Therefore it is written in *John* vii. 39. *The holy ghost was not given, because JESUS was not yet glorified.*

This faith in CHRIST's *ascension* calls upon us so to conduct our lives that *our conversation may be always*

ways in heaven, from whence we look for a Saviour.— To lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us; and to run with patience the race set before us, looking unto JESUS.

If the captain of our salvation is entered within the gates of the *new Jerusalem*, and calls to us out of heaven to hasten unto him, with a promise of the greatest reward, (see *Rev. iii. 2.*) let us suffer no delay in our heavenly journey; let us not linger in the pursuit of glory; let us not grovel amongst earthly things, but flee as an eagle towards heaven.

On earth, beware that you do not abuse those mercies, which CHRIST shed forth so munificently upon his people; even those great blessings of the spirit and ordinances, which are his precious ascension-gifts. Let them, who abuse the ordinances and officers of CHRIST, remember what is written, *He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* How much more shall they be brought into condemnation, who abuse the spirit, whom CHRIST sent from heaven, at his ascension, to supply his bodily absence from us, and is the great pledge of his care for, and love of, his people? How shall they escape the anger of CHRIST and the justice of GOD?

The spirit is that first and principal blessing, which CHRIST at his first entrance into heaven prayed for to the Father, that it should be sent immediately to comfort and to abide with us for ever. Therefore it deserves the first place in our hearts and esteem.

The spirit comes not in his own name; but he comes to us in the name and in the love *both of the Father and of the Son.* See *John xiv. 26—xv. 26.* Where we are taught that the HOLY GHOST is the messenger, that comes from both the Father and the Son, with the comfortable intelligence, that God's justice is satisfied, the fountain of his mercy

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is open; the redeemer of mankind is glorified; heaven is opened, and that CHRIST interceeds for as many, as believe in him and seek salvation through his merits. Therefore it is our interest, as well as our duty, to be obedient to this Holy Spirit: for, all offences against him will offend both the Father and the Son.

In fine, by the virtue of CHRIST's ascension the door of salvation is opened to all believers, and we shall ascend after him into the same heaven. For, there he has *prepared for us a city*, Heb. xi. 16. and an everlasting abode, *John* xiv. 2. if we don't forfeit our interest therein by unbelief and sin.

THE PRAYER.

GRANT, O almighty Father, that like as I do believe thy only begotten Son, my Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, to have ascended into the heavens, so I may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. *Amen.*

SECTION III.

Of CHRIST's Session *at the Right Hand* *of GOD.*

WHEN CHRIST *had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high*: which imports, that the Son of GOD, having finished his whole work upon earth, was clothed with the greatest power and highest honour, that heaven could give: for, such is the interpretation of that figurative expression of GOD's *right hand*.

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In this act of GOD's favour towards JESUS CHRIST we have a perspicuous proof of his divinity. It is an honour, to which neither men nor angels could presume to aspire. Human nature is below the angelic creation; and it was never said to an angel, *sit thou on my right hand*, Heb. i. 13. Besides, in this advancement of CHRIST's human nature, which properly is the only subject of GOD's favour, we are to look upon the man CHRIST JESUS to become the object of worship and adoration, not simply as flesh and blood, but as his human nature is personally united to the second person, and enthroned in the supreme glory of heaven. For *the Father has committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*. And their honour is so united, that it follows, *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, which hath sent him*, John v. 22, 23. Therefore, the divine penmen in all their salutations beg for mercy, peace and grace from GOD the Father, and our Lord JESUS CHRIST; and at their leaving a church, they commit them to the grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

Here also we find CHRIST invested with the sovereignty and supremacy over all things in heaven and in earth. For he who crowned him with glory and honour, did also *set him over the work of his hands, and put all things in subjection under his feet*, that he might reign till he should conquer all his enemies, Heb. ii. 7, 8. compared with 1 Cor. xv. 25. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. Psal. cx. 2.

This sitting of CHRIST in his human nature at GOD's right hand, implies the advancement of believers, who have followed him in the regeneration, to the highest honour, even to *sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel*, Mat. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30. For, this session of CHRIST respects them, and there he sits, as our representative.

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Hence we learn to understand the scripture, where CHRIST's prayer was heard, *That we may be with him, to behold the glory that GOD hath given him*, John xvii. 24. They, that sanctify CHRIST in their hearts, shall be made like him in the mansions of blifs, because they shall see him as he is. *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him: and to him that overcometh, I will grant* (saith the Son of GOD) *to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne*, Rev. iii. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 12. reserving always the preeminence to JESUS CHRIST.

While we are blessed with such a powerful friend in heaven, nothing, no not the gates of hell, can prevail against us upon earth. CHRIST sits in heaven on purpose that he may manage all to the advantage of his church. The people of GOD may suffer afflictions for a season; but no enemy can be so powerful, as to resist the force of him, who sits on the right hand of power. Let the temptations of the enemy be ever so delusive, and deep in subtilty and contrivance, he that sits upon the throne overlooks all, beholds all things upon earth, despises all their attempts to deceive his elect, and, in the end, will give them, that persevere in his faith, a way to escape.

Therefore, when we meditate upon this point of our faith, that CHRIST did not sit down to rest in heaven, till he had finished his work on earth, we are taught that it will be in vain for us to think of rest, till we also have finished that work, which we were sent into the world to do. There must be no thoughts of rest with CHRIST, till we have done working, according to the pattern sent down from heaven, and done sinning. Our life and labours must end together. There can be no rest upon earth. Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward; and they only are eased of their labours, who *die in the Lord*.

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This life is the vale of misery. Heaven is the place of rest and peace. We are no more than pilgrims upon earth. We must be dissolved and live with CHRIST, before we can arrive at eternal happiness at the right hand of GOD, where there are pleasures for evermore.

But these are not all the benefits of CHRIST's ascension: *He*, who is placed at the right hand of GOD, *doth also make intercession for us*, Rom. viii. 34.

This was necessary, because it accomplished the prophecies, by which the *Messiah* was represented making *intercession for transgressors*, Isa. liii. 12. And where GOD the Father is represented saying to him, *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*, Psal. ii. 8. Here is a prediction intimating, that the glorious success of the gospel, when preached to the world, should not only be the purchase of his death, but the consequence of his intercession. Besides, this intercession was typified by the high priest's entering every year into the Holy of Holies, with blood and incense to appear before the Lord in behalf of the people, making intercession for them. A type expressly applied to our Saviour *entering into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us*, Heb. ix 7, 9, compar'd with ver. 11, 12, 24.

This necessity appeareth also from the present circumstances of fallen man, who, being guilty, is unworthy to come into the presence of GOD, and is actually excluded therefrom, according to the Psalmist, *Thou art not a GOD that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.* This punishment is the immediate consequence of guilt: whereby the sinner is exposed to the curse of GOD, whose holiness obliges him to order such to depart out of his sight.—Besides, as GOD is a *consuming fire*, and human nature labours under a dread, which rather

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ther persuades us to flee from, than to draw nigh unto the almighty, we have the utmost need of an intercessor or an advocate with the Father to obtain our admission, and to bring us to God. Again; as there are many things brought against fallen man by the accuser, who is continually seeking means to prevent the blessed effects of CHRIST's satisfaction for the sins of man, in hopes to exclude him from the divine favour, he must be answered by a proper advocate to plead his cause. An affair which none but CHRIST our great mediator and advocate is fit to manage.

We cannot plead our own cause; for if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves; guilt stops our mouths, and renders us unworthy of any blessing from God.—No mere creature can do this good office for us; we are all under the sentence of condemnation, born in sin, and children of wrath. Besides, none can plead for a blessing on us, but he who is able to make an atonement for our sins, which no mere creature is able to do. Such is the atonement, which CHRIST has made by his blood, and therefore he alone is fit to be an advocate or intercessor for his people.

Accordingly we have the happiness to know that CHRIST is our intercessor, or advocate, as well as our redeemer. *It is he*, of whom the apostle to the Hebrews writes, *ever liveth to make intercession for us*, Heb. vii. 25. And the evangelist thus declares, *we have an advocate with the Father JESUS CHRIST the righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. An advocate that will intercede for his people for ever, as he shall always continue in this exalted state, Heb. vii. 25.

CHRIST maketh intercession for us by appearing in our nature continually before the father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice upon earth. CHRIST *appears in the presence of God for us*. For God cannot consistently with the glory of his divine

divine perfections save any of the fallen race of mankind upon any other condition, than that satisfaction should be given to his justice, and such a price of redemption paid, as tended to serve the glory of his holiness, and other perfections ; so he has, in the eternal covenant with his son, promised that if he would perform this work, then he would bring his people to glory.—CHRIST, on the other hand, undertook the work of man's redemption with this encouragement, that when he had perfected it, he should be received into glory, as a public testimony that divine justice was fully satisfied: therefore CHRIST's being seated at the right hand of GOD in heavenly places, as the consequence thereof, is a convincing evidence to angels and men, that his work is brought to perfection ; and that he has the right and power to intercede for those whom he has redeemed.

By this intercession CHRIST procures for his people *quiet of conscience* : for, as *there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not* ; the indwellings of sin and corruption create a continual doubtfulness and sometimes despair, which could never be gotten over without the assistance of JESUS CHRIST interceding for us.

By this we are delivered from that dread, which keeps sinners at a distance from GOD. Guilt exposes us to fear, and a dread of coming before the throne of God, as a being of infinite holiness and justice ; but when he is represented, as sitting upon a throne of grace, as the consequence of CHRIST's death and intercession, that servile fear is removed, and we are encouraged to *come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

By this we find acceptance both of our persons and of our service. The acceptance of our persons is a branch of our justification, which is founded

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on CHRIST's sacrifice and intercession, for we are *made accepted in the beloved*, Eph. i. 6. And the acceptance of our services, which are performed by Faith, supposes the removal of the guilt, that attends them, by reason of our sinful infirmities; wherefore GOD's People are stiled an *holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to GOD by JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

This Faith in CHRIST's intercession is a powerful remedy against despair and desponding thought, to which we are sometimes liable, by reason of the guilt of sin; when charged on our consciences. On which occasion we may now take up the words of the psalmist, *why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?* when we are assured that CHRIST interceeds on our behalf, for the forgiveness of our sins, and we ourselves turn unto the Lord by faith and repentance.

THE PRAYER.

O LORD GOD, who hast exalted thy son, the man CHRIST JESUS, to the right hand of thy glory in heaven, and hast promised to hear those prayers which are offered unto thee in his name, raise me up to more and more perfection of holiness, and enable me to trample upon sin, satan, the world, and upon every thing that displeaseth thee. Make me always watchful and upon my guard, to fly daily to thy throne for help and succour; since he cannot but conquer, who fights in thy strength, nor fail of being crowned, who overcomes thro' thee. Let the comfort of thy presence, and the certainty and nearness of my reward, make me act according to such mighty helps and glorious expectations: make me every day get some mastery over my sinful heart and satan's temptations, and narrowly watch where I am most likely to be assaulted. Pardon my offences
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through the merits and intercession of JESUS CHRIST. Cloath me with thy whole armour, and teach me to use it valiantly and effectually, that these short conflicts and trials of my obedience being ended, I may ascend up to those blessed mansions, which CHRIST has prepared for believers, in thy kingdom of glory, and there reign with thee and the same thy son JESUS CHRIST, and all his elect; through JESUS CHRIST my redeemer and only advocate. *Amen.*

SECTION IV.

Of CHRIST's Coming to Judgment.

THE last step of CHRIST's *exaltation* is, that he shall come again at the end of the world, to *judge* both the quick and the dead.

Though JESUS CHRIST is now solemnly invested with a power to exercise judgment, and is continually distributing rewards and punishments in the course of his divine providence; yet the full manifestation of his glory, as *judge of quick and dead*, and that in a visible manner and in his human nature, is deferred till the *last day*, when time or the duration of the world will be ended. Though he be now known by the judgments, which he sends forth, and are oftentimes attended with wonderful displays of his divine glory; and though the eternal state of all men be fixed by him at the time of their departure out of this life; at which moment a particular judgment is passed by him, on every soul departed; for, *it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment* immediately follows, which fixes the unchangeable decree of their happiness, or misery; yet, this is executed without those external and visible marks of glory in his human nature with which he shall come in the clouds of heaven,

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at the end of the World, *Matt. xxvi. 64.* which glorious appearing is set in opposition to that part of CHRIST's humiliation, in which he was unjustly judged and condemned by wicked men; in order to aggravate the crime of their unbelief, at whose tribunal he stood: and will be a severe reproach to such, who now contemn his name, reject his interest, and are deaf to his gospel; because their unbelief is an approbation of that unjust sentence, which was executed upon him by the jews. From all which CHRIST shall be for ever vindicated, when his glory shines forth in a most illustrious manner, as calling the whole world to appear at his tribunal, and rewarding every one according to their deeds.

However no man knoweth the precise time of his coming to judgment. This is a secret, which GOD has reserved to himself; that man may not indulge himself, the least, in a carnal security; but that we may be always prepared and ready for his coming.

As for the manner in which CHRIST shall come; it is said, that he shall come in the full manifestation of his own glory, and of his Father's, with all his holy angels, and with other awful and tremendous circumstances. For,

The glory of his divine nature shall then shine forth in a more illustrious manner than before. In his state of humiliation, his glory was veiled by his human nature. In this exalted state, he will be plainly seen to be GOD incarnate, invested with infinite power, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth, to determine the final state both of men and angels.

Here the same person that was ignominiously hung on a cross, will appear in glorious apparel, distinguished by this title on his vesture, and on his thigh, *king of kings, and lord of lords.*

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His glory will be displayed before the whole world; before the inhabitants of heaven, earth, and hell; angels surrounding him to do his will: men and devils appearing to receive their final doom. He will be glorified in his saints, admired in all them that believe, and acknowledged to be supreme lord and king by those that tremble, as well as those that rejoice before him. For every eye, even the eye of *Pilate* and *Herod*, of *Annas* and *Caiphas*, shall see him, and they also that pierced him, Rev. i. 7.

The glory of his Father shall also surround him. For, as every work, he was engaged in, or glory, which he receives, as mediator, takes its rise from the father, who sanctified and sent him into the world, to do his will, and furnished him with an human nature; united to his divine person, to perform the great work of our redemption: as he gave him a commission to lay down his life, and to take it up again; as it is the father, who hath appointed the day, in which the world shall be judged; and CHRIST shall come to perform that glorious work, pursuant to that decree or appointment: as every thing, which CHRIST does as mediator, is referred to the glory of the father; *John* viii. 49. and this work, which will complete the wonderful fabric of our salvation, will serve eminently to display the father's glory; and as he always received the approbation of the Father for the works he performed in the flesh for his honour; (for when he was here upon earth the apostle testifies, *he received from the Father honour and glory; when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* 2 Pet. i. 17.) therefore we may justly infer, that since his coming to judgment will be the most illustrious part of his mediatorial work, he will receive the most glorious testimony from the Father: and the sentence, *come ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom of heaven,*

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heaven, prepared for you from the beginning of the world, Matt. xxv. 34. will be a standing memorial of the Father's Approbation of JESUS CHRIST, and of his being well pleased with every thing, he has done in order thereunto: consequently he may be properly said to come in the glory of his father.

In this process the son of man shall be attended with all the holy angels; to acknowledge his authority; to signify their obedience; and, as ministering spirits, to be ready to execute all his commands, in subserviency to the proceedings of that great day.

The Lord himself, saith the apostle, shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of GOD, 1 Thess. iv. 16. to summon both the living and the dead before his tribunal: not only the graves shall give up their dead bodies, but they, who are found alive, shall be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, seated on the throne of his glory, (Matt. xxv. 31, 32.) to separate the righteous from the wicked, by the ministry of angels, see Matt. xxiv. 31. and xix. 28.

Thus we see those scriptures verified, where it is written, *GOD hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the MAN, whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance, &c. Acts xvii. 31. The father judging no man, but committing all judgment unto the son, JESUS CHRIST, John v. 22. comp. with Rom. ii. 16.*

Oh! how great must be the comfort, when we are thus assured of an interest in our judge in that day of the Lord. The same person, who redeemed us with his own blood, is to pass sentence upon us. He died to save as many as believe in him: if we die in his faith, he will not condemn us. *There is no condemnation to them, that are in CHRIST, Rom. viii. 1. Though he try us, as fire; we know we shall come forth, as gold.* CHRIST does not come to con-

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denn, but to absolve and to pronounce his servants pardoned and justified. See *Acts* iii. 19. *Matt.* xii. 32.

On the contrary, how mournful will be the case of such, who die without the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST? Of all creatures they are most miserable; being rejected of GOD, and without hope in CHRIST; accused by *satan*, and a guilty conscience: accused by their companions in sin; by their teachers and relations, whose good doctrine and advice they have despised, by every one; whom they have tempted to sin, abused, defrauded, defamed, injured in body or goods; and by the holy spirit for resisting his motions, and stifling thousands of his convictions; without the least appearance of excuse or defence: whose fate is related in the following passages of holy writ; *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when GOD taketh away his soul? Will GOD hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? No: for, many will say unto me, in that day, Lord, Lord, have I not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.*

Therefore let us secure an interest with JESUS CHRIST by the work of *regeneration*. This is the most solemn, necessary and important work of a *christian*, in whatever station he is placed in this world. Let us examine the state of our own souls: look into the scriptures, by which we are to be judged; then into our hearts, and then to heaven, saying, Lord, increase my faith, give me understanding in all things towards the attainment of eternal Life, and grant me thy salvation. And let not the trifles of time wipe away the impressions of death, judgment and eternity from our hearts; least they come upon us, as a thief in the night.

THE PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD, give me grace that I may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon me the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy son JESUS CHRIST came to visit mankind in great humility; that in the last day when he shall come again in his glorious majesty, to judge both the quick and dead, I may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, both now and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. VI.

Of Satisfaction and Redemption.

THE intention of all that JESUS CHRIST suffered was to *redeem* those that *believe* in him, and to make *satisfaction* for them. For, thus it is written—*But of him are ye in CHRIST JESUS, who of GOD is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30. and will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For, there is one GOD, and one mediator between GOD and man, the man CHRIST JESUS; who gave himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, 6.*

It has already been shewn, that man did in his original state belong to GOD, was created upright by the almighty, and was at peace with him: that he did forsake GOD, and by his fall, did incur the wrath and curse of his lord and maker: that man, thus laden with sin, and subject to the justice of an offended GOD, could not be restored to his favour, and to that happiness, for which he had been created, and

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which he had forfeited and lost by his own transgression and disobedience to the divine commandment, without a sufficient atonement; that there could be found no atonement or ransom, sufficient to satisfy divine justice, but the son of GOD made man: that the son of GOD, in the person of JESUS CHRIST, did offer himself a sacrifice upon the cross, to satisfy the justice of GOD: and that this redemption and satisfaction by CHRIST, was purposely intended for such only as believe in him: for there is no access to the father but through his son CHRIST JESUS.

By sin we forfeited heaven, and all its blessings: CHRIST and he only hath purchased it for us: and if we hope to have a title to it, or admission there, it must be upon the account of the atoning meritorious sacrifice, which he hath offered, and of the everlasting righteousness, which he hath brought in. Such a way for our redemption, is the contrivance of that wisdom, which angels adore, in which we have reason, with the highest wonder and gratitude to join with them; that *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, many should be made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. GOD making his son to be *sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21.

But how sufficient soever CHRIST is in himself, to make this atonement for believers, we are to seek its benefits in the way of effectual application: for, it was never known, that a poor, deceived, polluted, miserable sinner was actually delivered out of that state of perdition until of GOD, CHRIST was made unto him wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; to counterpoise that ignorance, guilt, pollution, and the whole train of miserable consequences and effects let in upon human nature by sin. For,

— Man

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Man in his fallen state is not only in deep misery, but he is grossly ignorant both of his own corruption and danger, and of the means to recover himself from it. Sin being entered, choakes up his rational faculties, and obstructs the entrance of spiritual knowledge, wherefore CHRIST is made to him *wisdom*, not only by improvement of those treasures of wisdom that are in himself, for the benefit of such souls, as are united to him, as an head, consulting the good of his own members; but also by imparting his wisdom to them by the spirit of illumination, whereby they come to discern both their sin and danger, and the true way of their recovery, through the application of CHRIST to their souls by faith.

But, as simple illumination would serve only to encrease our burden, and to exasperate our misery, so long as sin, in the guilt of it, is either imputed to our persons unto condemnation, or reflected by our consciences in a way of accusation; CHRIST is also made unto us complete and perfect *righteousness*, with design to remedy and to heal this dreadful evil, to dissolve our obligation to punishment, and firmly to establish a solid foundation for a well settled peace of conscience.

This is that righteousness, which the apostle rates at so high a value, and is so earnest for us to secure: *yea, doubtless, saith he, and I count all things but dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law; but that, which is through the faith of CHRIST, the righteousness, which is of GOD by faith, Phil. iii. 8, 9.* This is that, to which we are to trust, and in which we triumph, according as foretold, *surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, even to him shall men come: in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and glory, Isa. xlv. 24.* By this we are screened from all that we have to fear, and intitled to all that we can want. And this hides every spot

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of deformity, and renders those, who are found in it, amiable and lovely in the sight of GOD.

Although the removing of guilt is an inestimable mercy; yet this doth not make us completely happy; because he would be liable still to be daily defiled by sin, though he might not be damned for it. Therefore, to complete the happiness of the redeemed, CHRIST is made unto us *sanctification* also to relieve us under the dominion and pollutions of our natural corruptions. He purges and makes us clean, as well as pardons us: for this is *he, who comes both by water and by blood; not by blood only, but by water also*, John v. 6.

There remains something more to make our happiness perfect and entire, wanting nothing; and this is the removal of those wretched effects and consequences of sin, which (notwithstanding all the fore-mentioned privileges and mercies, still lie upon the souls and bodies of illuminated, justified, and sanctified persons. For, even with the best and holiest of men, swarms of vanity, loads of deadness, and fits of unbelief daily appear in, and oppress their souls; so as to embitter all the comforts of their life: and their bodies, like those of other men, who never received such privileges from CHRIST, as they do, are oppressed and moulder away by pains, deformities, and diseases, till they are brought to the grave by death. Sanctification does not exempt us from mortality; for, *the body is dead because of sin*, Rom. viii. 10.

Therefore, the sum of mercies is sealed up by *redemption*, which CHRIST is made unto us, redeeming us from the fruits and consequences of sin; and he so completes the happiness of believers, that it leaves nothing to desire to make a soul truly and perfectly blessed.

The benefits and blessings are applied unto us by GOD, and not by any human means. Of GOD
CHRIST

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CHRIST *is made unto us*, &c. The same hand that prepared this work, must also apply it, or else we perish, notwithstanding all that the father hath done in contriving and appointing, and all that the son hath done in executing and accomplishing the work of our redemption, thus far. And this actual application is the work of the spirit by a singular appropriation. For,

There is a primary application, which is the act of GOD the father, applying to CHRIST our surety, and virtually to us in him: and there is a secondary application, which is the act of the *holy spirit* personally and actually applying it to us in the work of conversion.—What was done upon the person of CHRIST was not only virtually done upon us, considering him as a common public representative, in which sense we are said to die with him, and to live with him, to be crucified with him, and to be buried with him; but it was also intended to give us an idea of what is to be done by the spirit actually upon our souls and bodies, in our single persons. As he died for sin; so the spirit applying his death to us in the work of *mortification*, makes us to die to sin, by the virtue of CHRIST's death: and as he was quickened by the spirit, and raised unto life; so the spirit applying unto us the life of CHRIST, makes us to live by spiritual *vivification*.

Hence we infer, that the actual application of redemption to us by the spirit in his sanctifying work, comprehends not only our justification, but all those works of the spirit known by the names of vocation, sanctification, conversion, and regeneration. For, when the efficacy of CHRIST's death, and the virtue of his resurrection come to take place upon the heart of man, he cannot but turn from sin to GOD, and become a new creature, living and acting by new principles and rules. Thus when the apostle

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speaks of the effect of this work of the spirit upon the *Thessalonians*, he saith, *our gospel came not to you in word only, but in power, and in the holy ghost*, 1 Epist. i. 5. where is discovered the effectual application of CHRIST to them. *And you became followers of us, and of the Lord*, ver. 6. which was their effectual call. *And ye returned from dumb idols to serve the living and true GOD*, ver. 9. in which words we have their conversion: *so that ye were ensamples to all them that believe*, ver. 7. which signifies their life of sanctification or dedication to GOD.

This application of CHRIST to the souls of men, is not to be accomplished by any means, but those which are ordained and appointed by JESUS CHRIST, as we gather from this passage of holy writ.—*He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the son of GOD; to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST*, Eph. iv. 11, 12. and by the ministry of the Spirit. Nothing can actually save a soul without the spirit's application of it. For where there are divers social or joint causes necessary to produce one effect, there the effect cannot be produced until the last cause hath performed its work. So that GOD the father may elect, and the son may redeem; but we cannot be saved till the spirit, who is the last cause, hath performed his part of the work: he coming with the authority, and in the name of both the father and the son, to put the last hand to the work of our salvation, by bringing all the fruits of election home to our souls, in this work of effectual vocation. So that the apostle thus states the order of the causes in their operations, for the bringing about our salvation:—*elect according to the fore-knowledge of GOD the father, through the sanctification of the spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet. i. 2. In which short passage

page we find GOD's election and CHRIST's blood, the two great causes of our salvation; yet neither of those alone, nor both together can save us; there must be the sanctification of the SPIRIT, by which GOD's decree is executed, and the sprinkling (which is the personal application) of CHRIST's blood, as necessary as the shedding of it; before we can have the saving benefit of either of the former causes.

As for the *extent* and *latitude* of this application, it depends entirely on the election of GOD the father, and on the intention of the son's death: for, the apostle declares expressly, *whom he did predestinate them he also called*, Rom. viii. 13. *who hath saved and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in CHRIST JESUS, before the foundation of the world*, 2 Tim. i. 9. and therefore it is written, that *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*, Acts xiii. 48.

Thus, we may observe, that there is a perfect harmony in the operations of the three divine persons for the salvation of mankind. Those, whom the father, before all time, did chuse; they, and they only are the persons, whom the son, in the fulness of time, for the execution of that decree, died for; as we read in *John xvii. 6. I have manifested thy name unto the men, which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me: and for their sakes I sanctify* [consecrate, devote, or offer for a sacrifice] *myself*, ver. 19. wherefore the benefits of CHRIST's blood is applied by the spirit to those persons only, and effectually, for whom CHRIST died. The spirit comes in the name of the father, and of the son: but, *they that are not of CHRIST's sheep, believe not: the world cannot receive him, for it neither sees nor knows him*, John x. 26.—xiv. 17.

But

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But this is not so to be understood, that CHRIST's *sheep* are not born under the dominion of sin: nor subject to divers temptations: nor frequently carried away by their own lusts and passions: for, by the same authority, we are informed, that the elect themselves are *by nature the children of wrath, as well as others*, Eph. ii. 3. compared with 1 Cor. vi. 11. where, after the apostle has recited a list of most profligate, lewd, wicked men, whose crimes would make sober nature blush, he tells the *Corinthian* converts, *and such were some of you, but ye are washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord JESUS, and by the spirit of our GOD.*

Here then we are to seek for a time, when our *state and temper* shall be changed; *when, and how* the first internal difference and distinction is made amongst men: and we find it is made, when CHRIST is applied to our souls, by the regenerating work of the spirit: which makes not only one man differ visibly from another, but the same man also from himself in his spiritual life. For, this work of the spirit maketh us *new creatures* in quality and temper; we are the same persons, but don't act in the same manner: *if any man be in CHRIST, he is a new creature. Old things are past away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17.

Neither let any *christian* deceive himself with a supposition, that this change is wrought in him so instantaneously, or completely in an instant, as to admit of no degrees. The application of CHRIST to us for wisdom and sanctification, is not perfected in one single act, like justification; but it rises by many and slow degrees to its full perfection.

Neither are these several privileges and benefits communicated to believers in one and the same way and manner; but differently, and diversly, according to the disposition of their respective natures. CHRIST's righteousness is made ours by imputation.

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tion : his wisdom and sanctification by renovation : his redemption by our glorification.

When we say that the *righteousness* of CHRIST's is made ours by imputation; it is not so made according to its *universal* value; but according to our particular necessity. It is not to make others righteous, but to make ourselves so. It does not teach that we have the formal intrinsic righteousness of CHRIST in us, as it is in him; but a *relative* righteousness, which makes us righteous, even as he is righteous; not as to the quantity or extent, but as to the truth of it. Nor is it imputed to us, as if CHRIST intended to make us the *causes* of salvation to others (as the *saint-mediators* are in the church of *Rome*;) but the *subjects* of salvation to ourselves; it being *inheavenly* in CHRIST, and can become ours only communicatively. By imputation *Adam's* sin became ours; the righteousness of the *second Adam* becomes ours by imputation also; *Rom. v. 17*. By this way the redeemer became sin for us: and by this way we are made the righteousness of GOD in him, *2 Cor. v. 21*. *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, was justified by this way: consequently this is the way for all the faithful, who are the children of *Abraham*, to be justified; *Rom. iv. 22, 23*. Thus CHRIST's righteousness is imputed to us and made ours.

Wisdom and sanctification are conveyed and communicated to us by another method. This operation is not done by imputation: but these graces are really *imparted* to us by the illuminating and regenerating work of the spirit. Those graces are really inherent in us. Our righteousness comes from CHRIST, as a *surety*; but our holiness comes from him, as a quickening head, sending vital influence into all its members. But as these gracious habits are seated in the souls of imperfect creatures, whose corruptions abide and work in the very same faculties, where grace has its residence; our sanctification

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tification cannot be so perfect and complete, as our justification, which inheres in CHRIST only. See Gal. v. 17.

As for redemption, or an absolute and plenary deliverance from all the sad remains, effects and consequences of sin, both upon soul and body; this is made ours by *glorification*; then and not before, we have put off those miserable effects with the body. Thus as *justification* cures the guilt of sin, and *sanctification* destroys the dominion and power of sin: so *glorification* removes, together with its existence and being, all those *miseries*, which sin let in upon our whole man, Eph. v. 26, 27.

Hence we are instructed to discover what a naked, destitute and empty thing man is in his natural and unregenerate state. He naturally and inherently hath neither wisdom, nor righteousness, nor sanctification, nor redemption. All these must come from CHRIST, or he must certainly perish. We therefore have no merit: when we have done all in our power, we must acknowledge *free grace* to be the sole author of all our doings. Thus the apostle viewing the principles of divine life in himself, hath in these words, *now I live, yet not I; but CHRIST liveth in me*, taught us to renounce ourselves, and to deny the least part of the praise and glory, as belonging to ourselves: and again, when in a just and necessary defence he was constrained to mention the best duties he had ever performed for GOD, he checks himself with a, *yet not I; but the grace of GOD, which was with me*, 1 Cor. xv. 10.

This doctrine will also shew us, that *imputed righteousness is not to be found, but in those only, who live in the power of inherent holiness*. This is a faithful saying: and those things I will that you affirm constantly; that they, which have believed in GOD, might be careful to maintain good works, Tit. iii. 8. Therefore beware of those libertines, who would persuade, to the

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the reproach of CHRIST and his gospel, that a man can be justified, who is not sanctified. Where there is found righteousness, there must be holiness also. They cannot exist seperately in man. It is certain, our sanctification cannot justify us before GOD: but it is necessary to evidence our justification before men. Therefore where it is written; *But unto him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 5. it is not intended to characterize and describe the justified person, as lazy, slothful, and unwilling to work, or rebellious and refractory, refusing obedience to the commands of GOD; but to represent him as an humbled sinner, who, being convinced of his natural inability to work out his own righteousness by the law, and seeing all his endeavours to obey the law fall short of righteousness, is said, in a law-sense, *not to work*; because he doth not work so as to answer the purpose and end of the law, which accepts of nothing less than perfect obedience. And, as *Paraus* rightly interprets this passage, when the ungodly are said to be justified, that character describes not the temper and frame of their hearts and lives after their justification; but what it was before: not as it leaves, but as it found them.

What then can be the hope of the unbeliever? who by nature is blind and ignorant, and yet refuses CHRIST, who comes to open his understanding with heavenly light and wisdom, who is condemned by the terrible sentence of the law to eternal wrath, and yet rejects CHRIST, who renders to him complete and perfect righteousness, who is wholly polluted and plunged into original and actual pollutions of nature and practice; yet will have none of CHRIST, who would become sanctification to him. Who is oppressed in soul and body, with the deplorable effects and miseries sin hath

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hath brought upon him ; yet is so in love with his bondage, that he will neither accept CHRIST, nor the redemption he has wrought for sinners.

It is to these CHRIST applies himself saying: *you will not come unto me, that you may have life*, John v. 40. according as it had been foretold, *All they that hate me, love death*, Prov. viii. 36. Sinners are so infatuated, that, though they are to burn, and sin kindles everlasting flames, they will sin. And though they cannot think of damnation without horror, and are loth to perish everlastingly, yet they carefs sin with pleasure, and flee from CHRIST, who only can, and would, deliver them from eternal misery.

On the contrary, if CHRIST, with all his benefits, be made ours by GOD's special application, happy shall we be in the day of our conversion. That is the day, in which salvation comes to our house, when we take CHRIST into our hearts, and troops of his graces enter with him, the least of which is greater than all the world can afford.

After all, should this doctrine awaken a sin-sick soul, and prevail with him to ask seriously, what method he is to take to secure that redemption and salvation, which CHRIST hath procured for his people? He must know that it is to be sought in the way of *repentance towards GOD, and of faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST*. A doctrine, which the apostles preached, and which no man dare to change; but at the peril of his own soul, and of theirs that trust in him.

It is not enough to be convinced of our own guilt and condemnation, and of our own inability to recover ourselves, we must feel that conviction yet more deeply, and impress it with greater weight upon our souls. We must acknowledge that we have *undone ourselves* by actual sin, and that *in ourselves is not our help found*. We must solemnly, sincerely

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cerely and expressly give up all *self-dependance*, and believe that we owe our salvation entirely to the *free grace of God*, and that, as sinners, we are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*, Rev. iii. 17.

In this abject state we must apply to CHRIST with a deep abhorrence of our former sins, and a firm resolution of forsaking them; forming that resolution in the strength of his grace, and fixing our dependance on him for our acceptance with GOD, even while we are purposing to do our very best, and when we have actually done the best we ever can do, in consequence of that holy resolution.

When we thus apply to CHRIST, *let us not say in our heart, who shall ascend into heaven to bring him down to us? or, who shall raise us up thither to present us before him?* For, the blessed JESUS by whom all things consist, Col. i. 17. is not far from every one of us, Acts xvii. 27. And he has made a special promise, which cannot fail, that he will be present *wherever two or three are met together in his name*, Matt. xviii. 20.

“Would you therefore, O sinner! desire to be saved? says a pious writer: go to the Saviour. Would you desire to be delivered? look to that great deliverer: and though you would be so overwhelmed with guilt and shame, and fear and horror, that you should be incapable of speaking to him, fall down in this speechless confusion at his feet, and *behold him as the lamb of GOD, that taketh away the sins of the world*, John I. 29. Behold him with an attentive eye, and say, whether the sight does not touch and even melt thy very heart! Dost thou not feel, what a foolish and what a wretched creature thou hast been; that for the sake of such low and sordid gratifications and interests, as those, which thou hast been pursuing, thou shouldst thus *kill the prince of life?*”
“—Be-

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“—Behold the deep wounds, which he bore for thee, *look on him, whom thou hast pierced*, and surely thou must mourn; unless thy heart be hardened into stone. Which of thy past sins can’st thou reflect upon, and say, for this it was worth my while, thus to have injured my Saviour, and to have exposed the Son of GOD to such *sufferings*? And what future temptations can arise so considerable, that thou should’st say, for the sake of this, *I will crucify my Lord again*, Heb. vi. 5.”

The sinner must repent of every sin, and must forsake it effectually, at the foot of the cross. He must sacrifice every lust, even his most darling sin; though it should be as dear to him, as his right hand or his right eye. Therefore, in our enquiry after salvation, we are led to that altar, on which CHRIST *himself was sacrificed for us*. He must also *yield up himself to GOD, as one alive from the dead*: because we were *not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of the Son of GOD, that lamb without blemish, and without spot*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

He must not only purpose, but he must do, as one thoroughly convinced of the evil of sin, and of the necessity and excellence of holiness. For this end, he must *believe in him, whom GOD hath sent*. This is the first great *work of GOD*. He must commit his soul into the hands of CHRIST, to be saved by him in his appointed method of salvation. And this is the great *act of saving faith*. He must not apply himself immediately to GOD, as absolutely or in himself considered, in the neglect of a mediator. To pay no regard to the Son, whom the Father hath appointed to bring sinners unto him, is not acceptable to GOD, nor safe for sinful man. *No man can come unto the Father but by the Son JESUS CHRIST*, John xiv. 6.

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We, therefore, must apply immediately to our glorious redeemer, just as we are, with all our sins about us. It is in vain to tarry till we are made righteous and holy; for that cannot possibly be done without him; no more than we can hope to recover health, by deferring our application to a physician.

Go to him, just as thou art, O sinner! and say unto him, "Blessed JESUS, though I acknowledge myself one of the most sinful creatures that ever fell prostrate before thee, I am come according to thy invitation and promise, *'come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* I am come, because thou hast declared most graciously, *him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* O Lord! help me, and save me, or I shall be ruined for ever through my own fault. For, I have broken the law of my GOD. I have deserved condemnation and wrath; and I am, even at this moment, under sentence of everlasting destruction: a destruction, which will be aggravated by all the contempt, which I have cast upon thee, O thou bleeding *lamb of GOD.* For I confess, that I have most basely and ungratefully wronged thee, under the character of a saviour, as well as of a Lord. I have been foolish enough to attempt to be my own saviour; but it will not do. I am convinced that there is no salvation but through thy righteousness. Therefore I renounce all help but in thee my redeemer. I look unto thee, blessed JESUS, and on thee, who art sure and steadfast, do I desire to fix my anchor. On thee, as the only foundation I will build my eternal hopes. To thy doctrine I submit: to thy atonement, obedience and intercession I trust: and to thy dominion I yield and pay a willing, delightful subjection. In token of reverence and love *I kiss the Son.* I kiss his feet
"and

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“and his hands stretched upon the cross. I admit thee, my Saviour, and welcome thee with unutterable joy, to the throne in my heart. Ascend it, and reign there for ever. Subdue mine enemies, O Lord ! for they are thine also, and make me thy faithful and zealous servant ; faithful to death, and zealous to eternity.”

But it is not enough thus to utter words before the Lord : this must be the language of the heart, and exemplified in a sober, righteous, and godly life ; following JESUS wherever he leads ; with a cross on our shoulder, whenever he commands us to take it up ; and persevering even unto death, expecting the crown of life.

THE PRAYER.

Worthy is the lamb, O Lord, that was slain, to receive power, and wisdom, and riches, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. For, thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever. Let the contemplation of what thou hast done and suffered in my behalf, what thou hast purchased for me, and what thou hast delivered me from, overcome all my corruptions, and make me to give myself entirely unto thy service : that being bought with so high a price, the price of thy life, and of thy precious blood, I may be wholly thine for ever, my only redeemer and mediator. Therefore, to him that is of power to establish me, according to the gospel, and the preaching of JESUS CHRIST according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began ; but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets

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phets, according to the commandment of the ever-
lasting GOD, made known to all nations, for the
obedience of faith; to GOD only wise, be glory,
through JESUS CHRIST for ever. *Amen.*

C H A P. VII.

Of Regeneration, or the New-Birth.

THE believer, being led to JESUS for redemp-
tion and deliverance, and being assured that
this mighty redeemer hath heard his petition, and
made him free, he must now become a *new crea-
ture.*

A man must be born again, that is, born of the
spirit of GOD, before he can be admitted into the
kingdom of heaven. A birth not to be effected by
nature; not depending upon flesh and blood, and
the will of man; but upon the will and power of
GOD, who created us, and is the great Lord and
giver of life.

There must be a principle of life, and the seed of
GOD: before ever we can be alive unto GOD,
through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. CHRIST must
dwell in our hearts; and we must live in him: we
must have the same temper, mind, and conduct,
which was in CHRIST JESUS. By which a man is
so fashioned and formed, that he becomes quite
another thing, from what he was before.

Our natural depravation shews the extreme need
of our spiritual regeneration. From our first birth
we inherit nothing, but wrath: but, there's no ap-
pearing before a just and holy GOD in the tattered
garment of sinful nature. We must have another,
and a better life, to bring us into favour with in-
finite purity: we must be new made, or as the
apostle

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apostle writes, *created in CHRIST JESUS to good works*. Nothing can avail without this *new birth*; neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision; no manner of external privileges nor services; but the *new creature* only. No, the most fair, civil and honest of the unregenerate, are no better than whited sepulchres, corrupt trees, aliens, strangers, and enemies. Even moral goodness itself may become a bar to salvation. They, that are content with a fair reputation for their morality, seldom think of repentance and regeneration. But none can be heirs of glory, before they become children of grace: neither can any be children, except they be born: nor grow up to eternal life; who have not passed through the gate of the *new birth*.

Even the best natured people must have their nature healed: and they have as much need to be converted, as they have to be saved. Except we repent and be converted, our faith is vain, there's no entrance for us into the kingdom of heaven. Grapes do not grow upon thorns: nor figs upon thistles. Glory is not a sudden new production: but it is grace grown up to full maturity and perfection in CHRIST. Only the *new man* shall dwell in the *new Jerusalem*. The heart of stone must be turned into a heart of flesh; which is the work of God, and not of mere man; of that God alone, who can raise children to *Abraham*, out of stones: light out of darkness: beauty out of deformity: and can change wolves into lambs, and dead sinners into living saints.

This indeed is the main end of CHRIST's coming down from heaven; of the pardon purchased for, and offered to us; of CHRIST's dominion in heaven, and of his sending of the HOLY GHOST; and this is the chief end of faith itself. For, whether we consider CHRIST living in his members; or whether we consider the heavenly desires of a truly hum-

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humbled mind ; this *new creature* is the fulfilling of such desires ; the life of such a member, and is, at once, the great evidence of our union with CHRIST, and of the sincerity of our faith.

In pursuing this interesting subject, I will endeavour to be as clear and practical, as possible. For this end I will begin with the general character of the *new creature*.

He enters into himself with all *humility*, having first laid the foundation of the *christian* building upon that heart-breaking concern, that godly sorrow, which attends the first awakenings out of a state of sin, and brings the sinner to the foot of the cross for pardon, grace, and acceptance.

This humble enquiry will convince him of his subordinate station, and of his dependance upon the Lord his maker; which will lead him to know, that he hath darken'd GOD's glory, disturbed his government, abused his goodness, tired his patience, and provoked his justice, to exclude him from rest and happiness, by his sins ; by the perverseness of his rebellious heart, and by a licentious life.

It will then also dispose him to see, that GOD's mercy is infinite : and that JESUS the Son of GOD has satisfied divine justice, and wrought a reconciliation between GOD and man. It will make him see himself *less than the least of GOD's mercies* ; and so put him in a way, wherein he receives the very least blessings with a grateful heart, and parts with it again, when GOD sees fit, without murmuring or repining ; patiently waiting for the gifts of GOD's providence and grace ; and quietly bearing the visitations of GOD's hand. It makes him consider his natural endowments, wealth and influence, to be given him only, in trust, for the interests of GOD, and the welfare of man. And, under this humiliation, he will be apt to esteem others better than himself ; to feel vanity and insufficiency in every
L
thing ;

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thing ; and to discover that there is no help for him, to get out of sin, and above the world, and to work out salvation, the eternal state of holiness and happiness, but in GOD's help and mercy.

Thus the *new creature* thinks and determines of himself. He regards himself, as a sinner deserving death, whom mercy only suffers to live and to hope. He regards himself, as a creature subject to GOD's government, and as a sinner in need of, and liable to, his correction : with all obedience he submits to GOD's rule : with all patience and thankfulness he endures his chastisements. All that he hath, and is, he regards as GOD's property, to be employed for his glory. He regards heaven, as a real treasure ; the delights of time, as a toy ; and the devil, the world and the flesh, as his adversaries, opposing his entrance into life. He walks forward, under a saving fear, and with that circumspection, as the hazardous and important circumstances which he is subject to, here in the body, require. Whoever can say, this is the sight and sense I have of myself, and of the things present and eternal, he is assuredly a *new creature*.

His next step is to *prefer the care of his soul* to all other considerations. The *new creature* having rightly estimated the value of himself and all things, he is called immediately to another employment, from what men naturally think of, and from what the interests of this life seem to demand.

He makes a new and heavenly use of life, and all things in it, and engages therein, after a peculiar and reserved manner. He is busied in the *one thing needful* ; to which he makes all other things subservient. All his actions move towards heaven, and every action of his life is tinged with, and bears the stamp of eternity. His chief industry is, by the grace of the Spirit, to subdue and mortify more effectually those selfish, earthly and carnal dispositions.

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fections, which corrupt nature hath given him, and to confirm and strengthen those gracious dispositions of the soul, which are necessary to qualify him for glory. Being born of the spirit, he seeketh those things only, which belong to God, and his righteousness: as he lives by faith, he is influenced more by those things he doth not see, than by what he does see; regarding life, as a pilgrimage; like a stranger from his home, contending for the house, which is eternal; and minding no other thing, comparatively, but how to become meet for this inheritance of the saints.

The new birth admits of no delay or backwardness. He that is become a *new creature*, is ready to every good work; ready in mind, ready in spirit; not only to be bound, but to die also for the name of the Lord Jesus. The *new creature*, hath the reins of his mind girt up, for the heavenly work unto which he is called. He doth not put off God with promises, which he never intends to perform; nor doth he refuse present duty. He never loiters, nor grumbles, when called by providence and duty. He does not presumptuously dally with temptations; nor parley with his spiritual enemy. He makes haste to keep God's commandments; and his heart abideth in his duty.

In a word, the *new creature* is a *new nature*: but, as we do readily, and with willing forwardness, whatever we do naturally; therefore, if the *new nature* be in us, we shall be ready to do the new work, and, in our own way to heaven, we shall be resolutely and briskly carrying it on, both in striving against sin within, and without us, and in exercising ourselves in all manner of good.

We must not only be ready, and forward to duty; but we must *hunger and thirst after righteousness*. To grow in the work of mortifying sin, and confirming the power of godliness in the soul, he, who is a

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new creature, will find an eager and continual desire. This our Lord himself calls *hungering* and *thirsting*; to inform us, that as much as any person, who is hungry or thirsty, longs after, and craves meat and drink for refreshment; even so doth the true Christian desire freedom from sin, and a more perfect renewal of his heart, in the ways of the gospel.

After this general character of the new creature; let us follow the strong and adviseable lines, in which the scripture paints this *man of CHRIST, within and without.*

We'll begin with the state of his mind. Here we must, in a particular manner, view the *understanding, will* and *affections*. The first of these faculties of the soul enables us to think, apprehend and judge of the things, which lie within our reach: a second determines and chooses what hath appeared to be good and eligible, in the decision of the understanding: and the business of the affections is to spur and quicken us both to judge and choose, and also to carry our determinations into action.

These faculties suffered greatly, were perverted, and abused by the *fall*. But the *new creature* has, in some measure, recover'd their right use; and, by the operation of divine grace, they are restored to their proper offices. For,

The understanding of the *new creature* hath a peculiar and different apprehension, and forms another sort of judgment concerning all things, from what the *unregenerate* hath, or is apt to do. *The natural man* (witness the apostle) *receiveth not the things of the spirit of GOD: for, they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned; but he, that is spiritual, judgeth, or discerneth all things, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.* Here is a spirituality, an humble and heavenly tincture, in

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all the *apprehensions* of the *new creature*: whereas there is a carnal turn, a self-sufficiency and earthliness in those of the *natural man*.

The new creature is possessed with an awful apprehension of *the majesty of GOD*: sees and heartily approves of the eternal power and infinite wisdom, by which the mighty Lord *ruleth over all*: considers him, in supreme sovereignty, lifting up the sword of unavoidable and exact justice over the universe, to constrain vice; and pouring out, with a boundless, gracious hand, blessings and happiness, to reward obedience. But that, which brings all the view of GOD home to him, is his peculiar apprehension of the divine presence. He sees him, who is invisible. He sees him filling all things; and he finds himself naked and open to GOD's eye, encompassed by him behind and before, with the very secrets of his heart unfolded to him. He rejoiceth in GOD's presence with him; is careful above all things to improve it; and it is his only consolation, that GOD is near him; who is so able to cure all his diseases, and to sooth and sanctify all his griefs.

If the new creature employs his understanding in meditating upon CHRIST, he judges him to be the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*; admires his power and ability to save those, that were lost. Views with secret satisfaction the victories he hath gained for man, upon earth, and adores the gifts and graces, he now dispenses from his mediatorial throne in heaven: he considers him to be the Lord of all things, and the author of everlasting salvation: and knowing the real want he hath of such a teacher, Lord and Saviour, he fixes his eye upon him with loyal and obsequious regard. Thus, being fully persuaded of CHRIST's fitness, every way, to effect the redemption of fallen man, his soul is drawn unto him, and with a strong faith, he cries out, *my Lord, and my GOD!*

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In like manner he retains a true sense of the HOLY GHOST. For, being convinced of the perverse inclination of his own nature, and of his own insufficiency to attain the least degree of *purity of heart*, without which he cannot see GOD; he apprehends the necessity he has of this divine illuminator, guide, and comforter; he regards him as *the Lord and giver of life*: he approves with wonder and thankfulness his invisible agency upon the souls of men: he admires his fitness for those offices, as GOD; and blesses his condescension, that he should prepare himself a temple in the hearts of polluted creatures.

When he looks upon *sin*; he judges of it, as that, which defiles the majesty of heaven; and would dare to attempt his throne: as what perverts all the gracious contrivances of infinite wisdom, neither suffering the maker to inherit his glory, nor the thing made, to prosper and be happy: he sees divine purity abominating it, and divine justice abused by it; justice most righteously lighting upon it, with inexorable vengeance, and mercy, only infinite, capable of forgiving it. He sees a troop of the most deform'd monsters couched under every act of sin; and misery, following upon its heels. He views it with self reproach, not able to express the loathsome sight he is, in his own eyes; and he acknowledges the justice and equity of those punishments, which GOD inflicts for it, either in this world, or in a future state.

In regard to GOD's *laws*. The *new creature* reads therein the undoubted duty of man to GOD: approves the purity of soul it enjoins, and loves it, because it is *holy, just, and good*.

He looks upon GOD's *providence* in the particular and fatherly government exercised towards himself, with a peculiar and submissive regard. He acknowledges the love of the divine hand, that dispenseth
both

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both punishments and rewards. He is confirmed in an opinion, that his soul is God's special care: while with grateful wonder, he reflects upon God's forbearance and gentleness towards him, upon the wise and strange means God has used with him, to bring him to a just sense of his duty; upon the kind disappointments, and the most inviting encouragements he hath met with from him: and upon the long and watchful discipline, which an affectionate Providence hath exercised over him.

Reflecting upon *death*, the natural's terror, he is not startled, but reverenceth it; because it is the sentence of the most High, against a rebellious world; and he acquiesces in it, as the messenger of life and of eternal liberty. He wishes to be more reconciled to it; yea, even to long for its approach, *to be dissolved*: waiting with faith, that through the gate of death he shall be brought *to the house appointed for all living*; Job. xxx. 23. And as every advancing day brings it nearer, he feels the impression more interesting, time more valuable, and life continually growing more vain and irksome.

When he looks up to *heaven*, all his soul cries within him, peaceful dwelling! where all the family of love meet and abide, in the beatific vision. Eternal house! which is not to be destroyed. Whose treasure never corrupts; whose pleasures last for evermore. On the contrary, defect, decay, uncertainty and unfitness are evidently stamp'd upon all earthly grandeur, wealth and pleasure in his apprehensions of them.

Hell, that state of darkness and misery provided by infinite justice, and a righteous vengeance for the punishment of sinners, he abhors; and learns, from his apprehensions of its horrors, more detestably to hate that sin, which forces the father of all mercies, so fearfully to correct, and so infinitely to punish that creature whom God created

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to be crowned with glory and worship. He discovers the danger; dreads the fall, and suspects his own steps; which by one slip might send him into an abyfs of misery, which has no end.

Thus the *new creature* exerciseth his understanding about these important things. His apprehensions are humble, near, and enduring: not a sudden heat, caught up upon occasions. They are the very principles, which direct the whole course of the *new creature*, determining his choice, and influencing his hopes and fears.

Such due apprehensions in the *understanding*, naturally influence the choice of the *will*; and, consequently, prove themselves to be right and just, by the power they have to engage the heart.

The *new creature* prefers GOD to the world. He goes over to GOD, thro' CHRIST, with the full bent of his will, and can find happiness no where else. Let him have GOD, and he is solicitous for nothing beside. He is jealous over himself, lest GOD in all things should not be preferred, watching with all diligence, that his heart be not seduced, and casting out with indignation that lust, which would be setting up an interest within him against his heavenly father. In a word, he is so thoroughly convinced of the justice of GOD's claim in him; and from experience, as well as promise, he so clearly discovers, that happiness directs him this way, as, with all his heart, to prefer spiritual to sensual gratifications; an eternal GOD to a perishing and wicked world.

In regard to *obedience*; he refuses his own pleasure, and determines to obey GOD's will, with a hearty consent. He watches the evil motions of his heart, and strives with earnest desire to oppose them. He would *bring every thought to the obedience of CHRIST*. He will seek the Lord in his worship; in the administration of his word and sacraments, and in all those

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those needful means, in which GOD has promised to meet his creature man ; and whose use is ordained to exercise and strengthen the soul in grace.

We must also be renewed in our *affections* ; those sensible motions, with greater or less activity, rise up in us, concerning every thing, which is the object of our thoughts : so that their office is to put the soul upon action. These affections are called *love* and *hatred*, *hope* and *fear*, *joy* and *sorrow*, which in the *new creature* are employed upon very different objects, than in the unregenerate.

Love is the predominant passion ; it leads and rules all the other affections. The love of a renewed soul is fixt upon GOD the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and upon doing good to all mankind. In GOD he sees all that can engage his heart ; all that is worthy and excellent, lovely and desirable. Here he rests his foot, whilst he sends up continually the warmest desires of his soul. He gives his whole heart to CHRIST, and becomes his spouse ; and he acknowledges and entertains the highest affection of the HOLY GHOST, the sanctifier and comforter of his soul ; because he finds him to be the author of his spiritual life, and is assured by his influence, he shall grow in grace and in favour with GOD for ever. In regard to *men* ; the *new creature's* heart is open to take in the whole world ; its pity extends to sinners wherever dispersed and distressed. But a peculiar tenderness of esteem and love rises in his soul for the children of GOD, be they high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant : have they been enemies, or do they differ in opinion, the heart that loves GOD will love them also.

This love of the saints is an infallible sign of true regeneration, and of the true love of GOD ; when a man loveth another heartily, purely because he seeth in him manifest signs and proofs of true and unfeigned godliness. *We know that we are tran-*

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slated from death to life, because we love the brethren, saith the beloved disciple of JESUS: and CHRIST has set this mark upon his servants; *by this shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.*

Where love is renew'd, there *hatred* will be *new* also. He finds a deep displeasure arise in him against sin, and every way thereof. He hateth the very garment that is spotted with sin. He abominates the corruption of his nature, and the residue of lust, which abides within him. He hates sin in others, and absents from the company of sinners, with a *depart from me ye wicked, I will keep the commandments of my GOD.* He shews no less dislike to all that looks like sin; to all temptations, that lead to it; and especially to that leading corruption of his heart, which so continually besets him.

As to his *hopes* and *fears*: his *hopes* soar above all lower expectations. Nothing less than eternity, the enjoyment of GOD and CHRIST for ever, and the attainment of perfect holiness, are sufficient to engage this affection. And his *fears* are of that peculiar kind, they center not in natural objects. He has always GOD's kingdom, the state of his own soul, and his neighbours good in his view. His soul takes the alarm, if he hath made the least step towards hindring his salvation. If he doth but suspect, that he is out of the way of it, he grows afraid. He fears least the enemy of his soul should take advantage of him. He fears least he should dishonour GOD, hinder the advancement of CHRIST's kingdom, or give offence to the weak. He fears giving pain and grief to others. He fears using the extent of allowed freedom, that he may not damage himself, or his neighbour.

The affections of *joy* and *sorrow* renewed are thus seen. When he walks under the comfortable communication of the divine presence he rejoiceth: but
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he mourns with a disconsolate grief, when GOD hideth the light of his countenance from him. He rejoiceth in the fitness, sufficiency and willingness of the Redeemer to supply his present and eternal wants: he sorrows in the deplorable views he hath of his master's kingdom trod under foot, and of the blood and grace of CHRIST vilely cast away on obstinate and impenitent sinners. He reviews the mighty work of conversion and sanctification wrought upon him, and rejoiceth with all grateful joy. He turns back upon his past iniquities: he turns in upon his remaining corruption and mourns. Thus it may be concluded, *old things*, the corrupt affections, *are past away*; *behold all things are become new*.

Here then we have a change most marvelous: and great reason to fear and tremble before the almighty potter, who hath power to make us vessels of honour or dishonour, according to his good pleasure. And whatever any one has better than others, let him own it for a plant of our heavenly father's planting; walk humbly before him; and give him all the glory.

Let us admire and magnify his free grace, and distinguishing love: and wait upon our GOD continually, to perfect the work of his own hand upon us. Yea, even in the worst case, let us not despair of his help, who plucks brands out of the fire; and brings even publicans and harlots to the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore, it is to some purpose, even for the very chief of sinners, to prostrate and to bemoan their case before him, and to beg for his saving mercy. For, tho' they cannot be saved till *renewed*; yet how soon can he make them quite other things. Let us extol his grace and praise his name, that brings such good out of evil, as since the fall of man, to set us up upon surer terms, and in better hands. For, where *Adam* could not keep that

wherewith he was trusted, each of us may say, with the apostle, *I know whom I have believed; I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that, which I have committed to him, against that day.* And in this good work begun in us, he has given us a pledge of his everlasting love to us: making us confident, that now our life spiritual shall grow up to the blessed life eternal.

THE PRAYER.

O Righteous GOD! I am, by nature, unclean: lying in my blood, and not only far gone, but dead in my sins: so that I require to be wholly changed, and quite renewed before I can have any hope in thy salvation. O give me a new life, a new heart, and a new spirit: and so make me, every way, a new creature. New frame and fashion me by the powerful operation of thy spirit: that I may not only make a fair appearance to the world; but that I may be such a one as is approved by the Lord. Yea grant, I beseech thee, that my inner man may be renewed, not only for once, but day by day, till I become perfect in CHRIST JESUS, thro' whose merits, and in whose name I adore thy goodness, and seek for regeneration and salvation. *Amen.*

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Law of Faith, by which Sinners are justified.

THE doctrine of *faith*, has at all times been so much embarrassed by private opinions and misinterpretations, that we find the apostle to the *Romans* handling it professedly, to deliver those converts from the corrupt notions they had imbibed about

about it, in the infancy of the *christian* church. In the third chapter, treating of the corruption of mankind, he proves that both the *Jew* and *Gentile* world, having broken the moral law, and thereby found guilty before GOD, were absolutely incapable of ever attaining inherent legal righteousness. Because no sinner, that has broken the moral law, can be justified by that law, whose condition or covenant requires perfect uninterrupted obedience in thought, word and deed.—Its style and language is—*Do this, and thou shalt live.—If thou transgress, thou shalt surely die.* Under this law there is no provision made for pardon. It knows nothing of mercy: and calls aloud for justice against the offender.

Thus every mouth was stopped and became guilty before GOD; and no flesh could be justified in his sight by the deeds of the law. But now the righteousness of GOD without the law, is manifested in the covenant of grace, in which the honour and dignity of the moral law is secured, and a wonderful way is revealed, whereby the sinner may be pardoned, and infinite justice may be glorified in shewing him mercy. And in this way of justifying sinners thro' the righteousness of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, the sacrifice of the covenant of grace, GOD the father proves himself to be just, and the justifier of him, who is of the faith of JESUS. He vindicates his justice and the honour of his law; and, these being secured, he then can justify him that is ungodly, if he believe in JESUS: for, then his faith will be imputed unto him for righteousness.

This is the doctrine of justifying grace, as revealed in the gospel. But it is so contrary to the pride of human nature, that we frequently hear sinners, even such as are sorry for their sins, wondering how GOD should justify sinners by his free grace, without any of their works and merit, and
ready

ready to ask, what, must I do nothing towards my justification? The gospel answereth, No. Man can do nothing; because while our sins are unpardoned, we are under sentence of death. We are dead in law, by the moral law, and we can no more do any act that is good and valid in the court of heaven, than a condemned criminal can do any act that is good and valid in a court of human justice. What! says proud nature, can't I work out and merit some part of my justification? No, says the gospel, none at all. The covenant of grace gives all the glory to GOD, that it may cut off all boasting from man: for, if GOD justifies sinners freely by faith without any works, where is boasting then saith the apostle? Man would have room to boast, if he was justified wholly by his own works, or partly by faith, and partly by his works: but since he is justified entirely by free grace, through faith in the righteousness of another, all boasting is excluded. By what law? By the law of works? No, by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified, and therefore no flesh can boast: for, how absurd would it be to boast of the works of that law, which brings sinners in guilty and condemns them? But all boasting is excluded by the law of faith: for faith receives justification freely from JESUS CHRIST, without any works or merit of man, and therefore is obliged to give all the glory to GOD. Under this law we now live, and by it only can we be saved.

By this faith we are enabled to repair the breach, which infidelity and transgression had made between GOD and man, and to join man to GOD in due subjection, as he was in, at his first creation. So that it is, as it were, the hand, whereby man being before separated from GOD, doth lay hold on him again, by believing his promises, and by placing all his trust and confidence in him.

But

But before faith can either join us to GOD, or be any thing available to our salvation, we must also have perfect holiness: a quality, which no body is able to attain unto, by his own strength and wisdom. Because, man in the very moment of his transgression, becomes guilty of eternal death, and so being once dead, he cannot raise himself up again, or make himself capable of holiness, much less work it fully and perfectly in himself.—Again, If it be owing to the patience and long-suffering of GOD, that man is not utterly destroyed and brought to nought by the anger of GOD, immediately as soon as he transgresseth; but that he is suffered to live, and to be capable of holiness; yet it is impossible to shake off that original sin, which is inherent to his nature, or yet to fulfil the law of GOD by actual obedience; both which are needful for perfect holiness. Or, finally, suppose a man able not only to do away his own sin, which he has committed; but to recover his original integrity; yet this would not be sufficient for his eternal salvation; because he would be as like to fall away again from GOD, as he was before.

So that before man can be joined again to GOD in happiness, he must do four things, none of which can be done by any man himself, or by any creature for him.

(1.) He must suffer eternal death to satisfy the justice of GOD for his sin already committed: but he that suffers eternal death, cannot live with GOD in happiness for ever.

(2.) He must be able to change his own nature entirely; to create in himself a new heart, a new mind, a new will, and a new man: which is purely the work of GOD alone.

(3.) He must be in a capacity to perform absolute and perfect obedience to the law of GOD.

(4.)

(4.) He must be able to continue in that obedience for ever.

What then shall man do to please God, and to inherit eternal life? Is there no means of salvation left for man? Can no way of performing these impossibilities be found out? Let *Solomon* and *Achitophel* assist us with their wisdom and counsel: let *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and the most renowned Philosophers, employ their natural wit and learning: and let even the divining spirits of the soothsayers lay their heads together, they will not be able to resolve the first question. They can't make that man to live in glory with God, who must die for ever. They must confess that death and life cannot be together. Here the utmost knowledge can but inform them, that man shall not die in his own person, but must get a substitute of his own nature, to satisfy God's justice by his death.

But where shall be found a substitute equal in nature and dignity to the man, that has sinned? Provided such a one could be found, as one friend to lay down his life for another; yet that death will not serve the turn, except he had more lives than one; because he must first die for his own sin, before he could atone for and discharge the sins of another.

I am sensible that there are some christians, who flee to the merits of some holy man, to *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, to the virgin *Mary*, &c. whose righteousness they look upon to be sufficient to obtain remission of sins, for as many as seek for their mediatorship. But this is a damnable doctrine. There is but one mediator between God and man, the man CHRIST JESUS. There is no merit or righteousness, that can proceed from any of the sons of *Adam*; no more than sweet water can spring from a corrupt fountain. They are all conceived in sin, and are children of wrath: and having nothing

to boast of, by the law of faith; no righteousness of any saint, however highly favoured by God, can serve for himself, or justify God's justice for his own sin. The best of men, when they have done all they can, are unprofitable servants, and (for any help they can have by their own holiness) in the same state of eternal death, wherein the greatest of sinners are: and their greatest righteousness, offered in the name of merit, is no better than filthy rags. Much less can we find salvation or ransom in the sacrifice of brute creatures: for we are told expressly, that *sin is not to be purged by the blood of bulls and of goats*, Heb. x. 4. *Nor will God accept a thousand of rams, as a sufficient atonement for the sin of a man's soul*, Mich. vi. 7. Our help is no better amongst angels. They have no will of their own: they are bound to serve the Lord their maker, with all their strength and power; and are not subject to the death, which is the wages of sin, and therefore not capable to satisfy God's justice for the sin of mankind.

Therefore, if no creature can be found to satisfy God's justice for the sin of man; shall we suppose, God will then save man without taking any satisfaction for his sin, or, that he himself would become mediator; since it hath been declared, that God has decreed the salvation of man? No, neither of these suppositions are possible. If he accepts man to happiness without satisfaction made to his justice; then he would cease to be just. Neither is it possible for God himself to make this satisfaction; because sin cannot be imputed to the Godhead; or if it could, God cannot die or suffer, much less sustain the punishment of eternal death, due unto the sin of mankind. See! behold the wretched case of man, whom God himself in his own person cannot save.

How-

However, the wisdom of the Almighty joined to his mercy, has found a way to save us miserable sinners, and at the same time to satisfy and establish the divine justice: not by polluting the Godhead with the sin of man; but by purging man from sin by the infinite power of the godhead: not by translating sin from man to God; but by making the nature of man able to bear its own burthen, by joining it to the nature of God: not by impairing his own justice, but by punishing the sin of man in a manner it deserved; and yet not consuming man in his wrath, but declaring the endless riches of his mercy, in saving him from death: that so we might have nothing to boast of; but that all the praise, glory and thanksgiving for our salvation redound to God, who is the beginner, worker and finisher; yea, the very means of it; and who, as he did in the beginning, without our help, create man in perfect holiness and happiness, does now himself and by himself, restore fallen man to perfect righteousness, holiness and eternal glory.

Therefore the only means, whereby God could restore man to his first estate, was, that he should take the nature of man unto his own divine nature. In which nature, united to the godhead, he might be able to take upon him the guilt, and suffer the punishment of sin. For this cause you have read, that God gave his only Son to be made man, and to die for our sins. See before p. 130, &c.

By faith in this death of the Son of God, salvation is brought to mankind. For, it delivereth the sinner from all manner of guilt of sin, whether original or actual; whether past, present or to come. Further, as this mediator doth redeem us from death, and indue us with perfect righteousness by his death; so by virtue of the holy Spirit, proceeding from the divine nature, the believer is endued (altho'

(altho' not at first) with perfect holiness, and preserved for ever from falling from this state.

Having shewn what is the object of justifying faith, we may now collect the difference between a legal and evangelical faith: or between that faith wherewith *Adam* was endued in the state of innocence, and that, which is found in the state of regeneration.

Both kinds are a trust in *GOD* for happiness, to be obtained by the means of perfect holiness: but the first kind looketh directly on the Godhead, without any mediation: the second beholdeth the Godhead, thro' the humanity of *CHRIST*, as thro' a veil or covering: for man, being now polluted with sin, dares not look upon *GOD* without a mediator, as he did before the fall. Secondly, evangelic faith contains in it forgiveness of sins; which was not in the first state of man. Thirdly, the righteousness, whereby legal faith seeketh happiness, is natural to man, and inherent in the person of man, and is his own: but the righteousness, which is by *JESUS CHRIST*, is borrowed from another person. The first kind is presumptuous, making a man trust in himself: but the second is humble, making the sinner renounce his own righteousness, and to flee unto *CHRIST* for righteousness. The first kind relieth on the equity and justice of *GOD*, which rewardeth the righteousness of the creature with life: but the other kind fleeth to his love and mercy in *CHRIST*, which pardoneth and saveth a sinner, *Rom.* iv. 5.

Legal faith only cannot justify a man; because it is but one part of man's holiness, distinguished by the name of a holy confidence or trust: whereas there can be no justification, where there is not a holy hope, love and fear; a holiness of the will and of the mind; of all the affections, and of the whole nature and actions of man. So that if we should
sup-

pose, that *Adam* did, in the very moment of sinning, and also after he had transgressed GOD's commandment, still retain that part of holiness, called a trust in GOD; yet we could not think that he did continue in the state of life, which is lost by one sin; and not kept by one part of holiness. But evangelical faith, though it be in its own nature no more than the holiness of one affection, namely of confidence, or trust in GOD, as legal faith is, bringeth with it perfect righteousness or justice, making the righteousness of CHRIST's death belong to the believer. In which respect it is called justifying faith: not that this faith can exist without some measure of the other parts of holiness, or entitle us to the possession of eternal glory without perfect holiness; but that in the matter of our justification only faith hath such force; insomuch that he, who believeth in the last moment of his life (as the thief on the cross, *Luke xxiii. 42.*) having neither time to do any good work, nor yet strength to utter any one good word, or even almost to entertain a good thought, is as surely and as fully purged from all his sins, as he, who has lived a thousand years in the greatest measure of faith, godliness, zeal, love, patience, sobriety, chastity, humility, and all other spiritual graces attainable by man in this life. For, inherent holiness (commonly called *sanctification*) be it ever so great, cannot be perfect; and therefore it is as little available for our justification, as if it were not at all. Imperfect holiness is no more able to justify, than no holiness; neither is there any regard paid to it in the affair of our justification, when we appear before the Lord our maker; tho' there can be no salvation without sanctification.

Again: tho' this one part of man's holiness shall serve for our justification, it does not follow, that we are saved by it, as a part of inherent holiness: for faith doth not justify us, as it is a part of holiness; but be-

because this affection (by the goodness of God, who has decreed man's salvation by this means) hath this natural property or quality to appropriate CHRIST, with his righteousness, to man.

Lastly, legal faith is easy to be had and attained unto by the supposition of perfect inherent holiness; it being agreeable to natural reason to distinguish as the Gentiles did, between good and evil, and to discover that the punishment of death is due unto sin, and the reward of happiness is appointed for strict obedience. But evangelical faith is a supernatural affection, which is contrary to our natural disposition, and cannot be attained unto without the mighty operation of the spirit of God.

Upon the whole: evangelical faith is a trust in God's promises, offering salvation to as many as rely wholly on the mercy of God thro' CHRIST JESUS. Or, it is a dependance on CHRIST for happiness. Or, it is a trust or confidence in CHRIST; whereby his death and the righteousness arising therefrom, are imputed unto, or appropriated to the believer.

Having done with the several parts of these definitions: let us proceed to enquire more particularly (1.) into the true nature of faith, to what head it is to be referred; whether it be a part of regeneration and sanctification, or something different from them? Secondly, what is the place and subject of it; whether it be seated in the mind, the will, or in the affections? Thirdly, by what means it may be wrought and attained? Fourthly, by what signs and tokens it may be known? Fifthly, whether it may be lost? Sixthly, how it hath the power to be able of itself to justify and to save us?

First, we are to remember that by regeneration and sanctification, the new creature and recreated holiness, the new man and holiness; we understand regenerate sanctity or renewed holiness: so that if faith be a part of the new man, it must also be a
part

part of regeneration and of holiness; or otherwise, if it be a part of man's holiness, it is also a part of regeneration, of the new man, and of the new creature.—That it is a part of man's holiness there is no doubt; because it is that holy affection, which shews that our heart relies upon God; and was found in *Adam*, consequently it is a part of regeneration and of the new man. For, tho' there is great difference between legal and evangelical faith, as touching the means of salvation; which in the former is the justice of God; and his mercy in the latter; yet both of them are to be referred to the same head of man's holiness: legal faith being a part of the created holiness of man, and evangelical faith part of his regenerate or re-created holiness.

Secondly, Here then we are instructed to find out the place or subject of faith: for, as it is no other than a holy affection of trust, confidence and dependance upon God, it must be seated in the will of man.

Thirdly, In order to attain faith, we must endeavour to gain a thorough knowledge of God's word, wherein we by the law are shewn sin, death, and damnation, to bruise and wound the heart; and by the gospel we are taught faith, righteousness, and salvation, to bind up and heal the wounds, and to comfort a sinner with pardon for his sins; with the means of grace, and with the hopes of glory. This knowledge must necessarily go before faith: for, the mind of man must be enlighten'd to see the truth, before the heart and affections can love and embrace it. The attainment of this knowledge is ordinarily made by the public ministry of God's word, and a sincere meditation therein: yet neither faith, nor any other spiritual graces, come by virtue of the means, but by the power and work of God's spirit; without which it is impossible for

man

man to understand, believe, and embrace the doctrine of the gospel. For, thus it is written, *the natural man perceiveth not the things of GOD; for they seem foolishness unto him; neither can he perceive them; because they are spiritually discerned.* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Was not this the case of the philosophers and wise men at *Athenis*, who mocked *Paul* preaching the resurrection of the dead? *Acts* xvii. 32. This also is the case in regard to the chief points of the christian religion. For, who seeing or hearing of *JESUS* the son of *Mary*, living in so low and mean a condition, and dying so shameful a death, as he did upon the cross, would either believe him to be the eternal and omnipotent *GOD* by whom all things were made; or, that he is able to save others, who did not save himself from death? Or, what man esteemed for his human wisdom and knowledge, would forsake all the joys, pleasures, profits and advantages of this present world, and endure the sorrows, reproaches, troubles, losses, dangers and manifold crosses, to which the righteous are subject in this life, in hope of a reward in heaven? did not the spirit of *GOD* illuminate us with the eye of faith, when reason is dazzled, confounded, and unable to lead us unto the knowledge of *GOD*, and of his son *JESUS CHRIST*. Hence it is, that *not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble, not many rich are called to faith; but GOD hath chosen foolish and weak things to confound the wise.* 1 Cor. i. 27. Nor is this observation in the apostolic age less applicable now. For *CHRIST* himself speaking of these last days, asketh this remarkable question, *Think ye that the son of man when he cometh, shall find faith upon the earth?* *Luke* xviii. 18. and he gives the reason for this doubtful interrogation in another place. *Because, saith he, iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; insomuch that unless* those

those days were shortened, no flesh should be saved, Matt. xxiv. 12, 22.

The cause of this defect or difficulty of believing is, (1.) to be ascribed to the increase of sin and iniquity : for the sins of all ages flow together into the last ; as into a common sink : and (2.) to the present state of the church, unto which GOD doth not reveal himself in these last ages, so manifestly and visibly as he did in the first ages of the world, by apparitions of angels, by visions and dreams, by visible forms and sensible voices, speaking to his ministers and servants, as one man doth to another ; by oracles answering all questions, by temporal blessings bestowed on the faithful, by corporal punishments laid on the wicked ; by extraordinary gifts of prophecy and immediate revelation, of speaking strange tongues, and working divers miracles. For GOD did so evidently manifest himself by these and such like means, to the old world, that they, who did not believe his word, may be said to be such, as would not trust to, or believe in their own senses. But, in these last ages, GOD having once revealed himself in his son and in the gospel, sufficiently for the salvation of the elect, and in a manner more fully and clearly, than he ever did before, doth not any longer reveal himself by any of the aforesaid means : so that they, who won't believe, except they see the power of GOD ; not being able by human means to search out spiritual things, look upon the Lord our maker with contempt, and neither believe nor fear GOD.

Therefore it behoves all that tender their own salvation, to be watchful in preserving faith, and also diligent and careful in feeling for it. For, tho' all our endeavours cannot work faith in our heart, without the blessing of GOD ; yet it is in the power of man to use the outward means of conveying it to his soul : and, if we thus draw nigh to

God, he will draw nigh to us ; he is always near at hand to help our infirmities, to deliver us out of temptation, and to establish our faith, if we seek him in the way, he is to be found. And, when we are persuaded that we have attain'd unto a true saving faith, *let us not be high minded, but fear* least we be deceived with that common error, which prevails in such men, who are not ashamed to profess that they do, and always did trust in CHRIST, and upon examination are found to be ignorant of God, and of his word, and not to have the least shadow of faith in their hearts.

In order therefore, to arrive at a true knowledge of this faith in us, there are certain signs, whereby it is to be discovered.

These signs are taken from the spiritual graces, and the several parts of holiness, found in a regenerate man, which come from faith, as from a fountain or root ; and as certainly shew the sincerity of it, as sweet water and good fruit indicate the goodness of the spring and tree.

He, that would enquire into the soundness of his faith, must therefore, examine into the sincerity of his knowledge, love, fear, reverence and obedience, which he oweth to God. Where these graces abound, there the heart is truly replenished with faith : on the contrary, if this fruit doth not appear, such a one's faith is not a living tree planted by the rivers of God's blessings ; but a dead stock, having nothing but the outward form of a tree.

If it be ask'd, whether this faith once attained, may be lost ? It is answer'd, That where it has been truly imprinted in the heart by the finger of God, it abideth for ever. For, tho' it is subject to many alterations, in regard to its increase and decrease ; tho' it sometimes seems to be dead at the root, so as to yield little or no fruit, yet, as the sap and life

of a tree remain in the tree, when it seemeth dead and withered, during the winter, this faith or spiritual life, remaineth hidden in the heart; and will discover itself in due time. The conversion of a man from infidelity to faith, worketh such a total and strange change in him, that he never more can fall into his former state of unbelief.

How comes it to pass, that of all the spiritual graces which are in the mind, will and affections of man, and of all the parts of man's holiness, this only should have in it this wonderful virtue and power to apprehend CHRIST, and to make a man perfectly just before the judgment seat of CHRIST? And why not the true knowledge of GOD, unfeigned love, the fear of GOD, and a general holiness of life and conversation, should not as well justify a man, as this one affection of trust and confidence? To which it is answered from the whole tenor of the gospel, that this means of justifying man by faith only, is the most effectual way to glorify GOD, whose glory is the ultimate end of all his decrees and actions; for if man could be made righteous by his holiness or love, he might impute his salvation to his own merit; for, perfect love serveth love, and holiness will demand life, as a just debt. But trust implieth an humble, loyal, and dutiful subjection, acknowledging the unworthiness, baseness, insufficiency and weakness of man, and the mercy, goodness, love, favour, bounty, truth, and power of GOD. Therefore the apostle to the *Romans* having ask'd, what law, or means of salvation, taketh away all boasting from man, and so giveth all the glory of our salvation to GOD? replies, not the law of works, or inherent holiness, but the law of faith. Of all the graces which are in man, faith only is able to make him partaker of CHRIST's death and righteousness, and of salvation. For, as a tenant enjoyeth his house and lands,

not

not because he loveth, and feareth his Lord, or because of any inherent virtue he has to boast of, but only because he depends upon his Lord, and so purchaseth unto him worship and honour, by relying himself wholly upon his love, favour, bounty, power, riches. &c. so is the case of man, in respect of his salvation; no grace, except our whole trust in GOD, and on his mercy thro' CHRIST, being able to convey unto us remission of sins, and eternal life.

Man hath nothing to do but to believe; and this too is the gift of GOD's free grace: for righteousness is imputed to him, who worketh not, but believeth, even as *David* also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom GOD imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. And the apostle in his most excellent discourse at *Antioch* (*Acts* xiii.) concludes with this application. *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that thro' this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses; whether we consider it in its moral or ritual capacity: so that the justification of a sinner is put wholly upon believing: as it is written, all that believe are justified.*

Thus also we are taught by the church of *England* in her articles and homilies. The *eleventh article* expressly declares, "That we are accounted righteous before GOD *only* for the merit of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: wherefore that we are justified by faith *ONLY*, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort."

The *hamily of justification* informs us, "That this saying, that we be justified by faith *ONLY* freely, and without works, is spoken for to take

“ away all merit of our own works, as being un-
 “ able to deserve our justification at GOD’s hand,
 “ and thereby most plainly to express the weakness
 “ of man, and the goodness of GOD; the great
 “ infirmity of ourselves, and the might and power
 “ of GOD; the imperfection of our own works,
 “ and the most abundant grace of our Saviour
 “ CHRIST, and therefore wholly to ascribe the me-
 “ rit and deserving of our justification unto CHRIST
 “ only, and his most precious blood shedding. This
 “ faith the holy scripture teacheth us is the strong
 “ rock and foundation of the *christian* religion: this
 “ doctrine all old and ancient authors of CHRIST’s
 “ church do approve; this doctrine advanceth and
 “ setteth forth the true glory of CHRIST, and
 “ beateth down the vain glory of man: this, who-
 “ soever denieth, is not to be accounted for a
 “ *christian* man, nor for a setter forth of CHRIST’s
 “ glory; but for an adversary to CHRIST and his gos-
 “ pel, and for a setter forth of man’s vain glory,” and
 afterwards in the *third part* of the same *homily* we
 read, “ That the very true meaning of this propo-
 “ sition or saying, we be justified by faith in CHRIST
 “ only, is this: we put our faith in CHRIST, that
 “ we be justified by him ONLY, that we be justifi-
 “ fied by GOD’s free mercy, and the merits of
 “ our Saviour CHRIST only, and by no virtue or
 “ good works of our own, that is in us, or that
 “ we can be able to have, or to do, for to deserve
 “ the same, CHRIST himself ONLY being the cause
 “ meritorious thereof.”

THE PRAYER.

O Father of all mercies, and GOD of all com-
 fort, I am for ever bound to magnify the
 riches of thy grace, and the wonders of thy love to-
 wards sinful man, that, when there was nothing to
 be

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be expected but a fearful execution of thy fierce wrath and indignation, thou didst open a way for my free justification, pardon and salvation; by making me dead to the rigour of that law, which pronounced the sentence of death upon my soul, and by giving thy beloved son to be a curse for me, and a sacrifice for my sins: grant that I may be truly sensible of this thy love towards mankind, and that my heart may sincerely trust to the most precious oblation of JESUS CHRIST, for my own justification; beseeching thee to increase my faith, and that I may be justified and reconciled to thee my GOD, thro' faith in the blood of the same JESUS CHRIST.
Amen.

C H A P. IX.

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THEY that are not sensible of their adoption, ought to be rouzed up to better sentiments by the apostolic call, *What know not your own selves?* 2 Cor. xiii. 5. which upbraids them of ignorance, and throws it upon them, as their own fault. For, *the spirit of a man* (if attentive) *may know the things belonging to a man*; whether he be alive in CHRIST, or dead in sin: whether he be sincere in his faith and repentance, or plays the hypocrite.

He that believes hath the witness in himself; and may know that he hath eternal life: otherwise, the heirs of the promise could not have that strong consolation, of which the apostle writes in *Hebrews* vi. 18. It would be small comfort, and poor consolation, only to believe in general the forgiveness of sins, and that we are in a good state, from whence we may soon fall. But herein lies the strength of our consolation,

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tion, that we are the sheep of CHRIST's fold, and so in his hands, that none shall pluck us out.

This is even made one of the ends, why God's spirit is given to his children : that they may have confidence, and be *embolden'd to cry, Abba Father ; and to bear witness with their spirits, that they are the children of GOD.* If there be no assurance to be had, what meaneth that scripture, which informs us of *the earnest of the spirit in our hearts*, 2 Cor. i. 21. and where believers are said *to know that CHRIST abideth in them, by the spirit, he hath given them*, 1 John iii. ver. ult. And again, where it is commanded *to give diligence to make our calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. i. 10.

Let us, therefore, not hang at uncertainty, nor be awed by that spirit of antichrist, which is continually at work to deprive believers of this strong consolation, or knowledge, that, if we live in CHRIST, we are sure of the mercies of GOD, and that nothing can hurt us. Having a certain promise, we must believe, in hope, even against hope, and even in spite of our sins and fears. Tho' a man walks in darkness and has no light, yet let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his GOD, who pardons iniquity, transgression and sin, and accepts the undeserving and the ill-deserving ; not for their sakes, but for his own.

But tho' believers are well assured that their faith is well grounded, and are persuaded that they have already built on that foundation : there still remains somewhat to confirm them in the assurance that they have done so. We must not only believe, but we ought to have a sufficient ground for our believing, that we have believed. For, as a pious and judicious writer observes, " The assurance of CHRIST's
" righteousness is a direct act of faith, apprehend-
" ing imputed righteousness : but the evidence of
" our justification, we now speak of, is the reflex
" light,

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“light, not by which we are justified; but by
“which we *know*, that we are justified.”

The most effectual way to find out and to know this, is to look back and reflect upon our own hearts, and examine them concerning the actions and cogitations that have passed through there: a privilege peculiar to a rational Being, above all the other works in the creation. In this examination, if a man be convinced in his spirit of his own sinful state and corruption, and that his sins expose him to GOD's wrath and to eternal damnation: if he be also convinced that there is no help for him in himself, by any thing that he can do to obtain pardon and forgiveness, and to escape the torments of hell: but that his reconciliation with heaven, and his deliverance from eternal punishment, is to be had thro' JESUS CHRIST alone: and if he has felt a secret persuasion in his heart, that GOD in CHRIST doth bear a love to him; and that his heart hath been inflamed towards GOD in love again, manifesting itself in an unfeigned desire to be obedient and subject to his will in all things, and never to displease him in any thing; he has a sure ground to lay his believing, that he has believed upon, or as the apostle and evangelist expresses it, *Hereby you may know, that you are of the truth, and may assure your heart thereof before GOD, 1 John iii. 19.*

Some perhaps may inadvertently imagine, that this reflecting upon one's self to find out a ground to lay his believing, that he hath believed upon, is a turning back from the covenant of grace, to the covenant of works, and so from CHRIST to himself. Whence observe, that, if he should look upon these things in himself, and thereupon conclude, that *because he hath done this*, GOD hath accepted of him, and justified him, and will save him; and so make them the *ground* of his believing, this would

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be to turn back from the covenant of grace to the covenant of works, and from CHRIST to himself.— But whoever looks upon these things in himself, and thereupon only infers or concludes, that *because these things are in his heart*, CHRIST dwells there by faith, and therefore he is accepted of GOD, and justified, and shall certainly be saved; and so make them, not the ground, but the *evidence* of his believing, or the ground of his believing, that he hath believed, he thereby, neither turneth back from the covenant of grace, to the covenant of works, nor from CHRIST to himself. So that “ these things
“ in his heart being the daughters of faith, and the
“ offspring of CHRIST, tho’ they cannot at first
“ produce, or bring forth their mother; yet they
“ may nourish her in time of need.”

“ We may proceed, and we shall find in ourselves other things to be evidences of our believing, or grounds to believe, that we are in the faith, or have believed. For, there are several other effects of faith, which if a man have in himself, he may look upon them to be real evidences, that he hath truly believed. As,

FIRST, when a man *truly loves the word of GOD*, and makes a right use of it, *hungering and thirsting* after it, as after the food of the soul; desiring it at all times, and delighting to exercise himself therein constantly, or, as the Psalmist expresses it, *day and night*: receiving it as the word of GOD, and not as the word of man: setting his heart, in the time of hearing or reading it, as in GOD’s presence, and being affected with it, as if spoken unto by the Lord himself; being most affected with that ministry, or with that portion of scripture which sheweth him his sins, his own unworthiness, and the necessity of a saviour: submitting his reason and affections to the revealed will and commandments of the Lord;
and

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and fixing his heart thereon, as his chief comfort and support in the time of affliction.

SECONDLY, When a man *truly loves the children of GOD*, or all godly and religious people, purely and in a spiritual sense, for the graces of GOD which he seeth in them: and when he delights in this society and company, and makes them his only companions, ready to communicate to their necessities: and when he hath not the faith of CHRIST *in respect of persons*, James ii. 1, 2. and Rom. xii. 16.

THIRDLY, When a man's *love* extends to his *very enemies*, Matt. vi. 14. by praying for them, and forgiving them their trespasses against him. When he can bring himself into such a temper of soul, as to forbear prosecution, when it is in his power to take vengeance upon them, 1 Pet. iii. 9. Rom. xii. 14. when he strives to overcome their evil with goodness, being willing to help, and to relieve them in their distress, and to do them any good for their soul and body; and when he can freely and willingly acknowledge his enemy's just praise.

But the most certain way to gain an assurance, is to seek after a *renewed knowledge*, which is the first and chief part of GOD's glorious image in man; because in the work of regeneration, the illumination of the mind, with the true knowledge of GOD, both hath the first place, and is the cause of all the rest of man's holiness. Thus we are taught by CHRIST himself, *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness*, Mat. vi. 22, 23. That is to say: if the mind of man, which is the eye of the soul, be truly sanctified and renewed with knowledge, there shall be found holiness in all the faculties of the soul, and in the whole man. But if the mind be overpowered with darkness and ignorance, the whole man shall be overpowered with sin and wickedness.

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edness. For, it is impossible, that a man should either trust or hope in GOD, or love, fear and obey him, or perform any duty of holiness unto the Lord our Maker, if he does not know him in his mercy, love, goodness, promises, power, justice, and in his other attributes. Likewise it is as impossible, that a man should know, and be fully persuaded that GOD is true in his promises, merciful, bountiful and just, and not be affected and influenced by them in his life and conversation.

Therefore, the first action of, the holy Spirit framing the new man in the elect, is to clear their mind of that natural dulness, ignorance and unbelief, which is always found in unbelievers, and to make them able to conceive, understand and to know GOD, according to the exhortation and doctrine of the apostle, *Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD*, xii. 2. And again, *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and (so) put on the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness*, Eph. iv. 23, 24. He also pray'd for the *Colossians*, That they might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, Col. i. 9. And while this same apostle preached the glad tidings of salvation to the *Philippians*, GOD open'd the heart of *Lydia* to believe his word, tho' the reprobates did not conceive nor understand the things which were spoken of *Paul*, *Acts* xvi. 14.

This illumination of the mind is the most sensible and evident thing in regeneration, and it is that, whereby they, that deny the work of the holy spirit in renewing the faithful, may most plainly be convinced: for, nothing can be more wonderful, than that men, who before were dull, rude, simple and unlearned, yea incapable of any kind of knowledge, should on a sudden become able most steadfastly

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fastly to comprehend in their minds, and very sensibly to express in words the hidden mysteries of the *christian* religion. Yet, we know this to be true both by experience, and by the evidence of the apostle, who writeth, *That the spiritual man discerneth all things, because he hath the mind of CHRIST*, 1 Cor. ii. 15, 16. A knowledge that cometh not by any natural strength or means, but it is the gift, and cometh by the work of GOD, speaking to us in his holy word. Therefore every one who desires to attain to this knowledge, and to feel in himself this wonderful work of GOD in the renewal of his mind, must give himself diligently and continually to the hearing, reading and meditating of the holy scriptures.

There is, besides this general knowledge in the mind of man, a *particular knowledge*, called *conscience*, of great use in his spiritual state: for as much as it is an action of the mind, and the knowledge of good and evil, or of man's estate, whether he be righteous or sinful before GOD, and consequently whether he be in a state of life or of death. For thus it is defined in *Romans ii. 15. To be the accusing or excusing of a man's thoughts*, or of his mind. So that conscience may be called the evidence which in the judgment-hall of a man's mind, doth either excuse and justify his several actions, and his whole life and person, and pronounce the sentence of life unto him; or accuse and condemn him for sin committed, and adjudge him to eternal death, before the tribunal seat of GOD.

In the state of innocence this conscience justified man wholly, he being then without any stain of sin. And it is from this excusing conscience that a confidence ariseth, which emboldens man to converse in the presence of GOD; to hear him speak; to see his glory; and to have a kind of familiarity with his Maker, as *Adam* had before his fall. But

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an accusing conscience causeth shame and fear, as may be exemplified in the same *Adam*, who, having sinned, was driven by this accusing conscience into the thick of the garden to hide himself from the presence of the Lord.

This particular knowledge and motion of the mind, which we call conscience, is found in the regenerate, and worketh powerfully both in accusing and excusing them before GOD. For, the faithful having both a true knowledge of sin, by the general renovation of their minds, and also sin itself by the infirmity of the flesh, they must have an accusing conscience, which is no more than a knowledge of sin in themselves. This knowledge serves to make them ashamed of their transgression, and fearful of those temporal punishments to which their sins have exposed them. It also produceth an increase of humiliation, and becometh a bridle to restrain them from committing any thing, which may draw upon them the wrath and judgments of GOD. Thus we see the *accusing conscience* of the faithful; which worketh powerfully when they by temptation are fallen into some great sin.

Again: this conscience excuseth the faithful before GOD, in regard both to their own inherent righteousness, and also of the imputed righteousness of CHRIST. In the first respect their conscience excuseth them, not as being perfectly just; but as those, who are GOD's faithful servants, performing unto him, tho' imperfect, yet true, unfeigned and hearty obedience. Even as *David* did often, in the book of *Psalms*, offer his own innocence and integrity to the trial of GOD. Yet this excusing conscience does not presume to appear at the judgment seat of the Almighty; where it would be found as a filthy and defiled rag: but it cometh into the court of GOD's mercy and love, who rewardeth the godliness of his servants with temporal blessings, and security

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curity from temporal judgments. But the true *excusing conscience* looks unto the perfect righteousness of CHRIST; by virtue of which, it doth justify and absolve the faithful, as being perfectly just and free from all guilt of sin.

This excuser is he, who only can abide the trial of GOD's justice, and who maketh the faithful rejoice in all tribulations, and to rest secure in regard of danger. It makes them triumph over sin, satan, hell, death and damnation, and fills their hearts with such a perfect peace, as makes them feel the joys of heaven, whilst they live upon the earth. This kind of excusing conscience, like the other parts of sanctification and holiness of life, is the effect of a true faith: the one delivereth the faithful from the fear of temporal evils; the other from the fear of eternal death. And from them both ariseth the *assurance of salvation*, or that undoubted persuasion and certain knowledge of the faithful, that they are of the number of those, who shall be made partakers of eternal glory.

However some object and say, that it is impossible for any man to attain to any such knowledge; because the eternal counsels and decrees of GOD are kept so secret, that no man hath at any time known the mind of GOD, or been of his counsel in that case. And again: that this knowledge, if attainable; must be acquired either by immediate revelation, or by arguments drawn from a man's own state of faith and holiness, which he findeth in himself. But it cannot be acquired by immediate revelation: and the other means is so uncertain, that it is impossible to build a certain persuasion upon such a precarious foundation; besides, this might be a way to open a door to all licentiousness and ungodly security. For, why should the person, who is thoroughly persuaded that he shall be saved, give him-

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himself any trouble or concern to work out *his salvation with fear and trembling?*

To which it is answer'd, that we agree that the number of the reprobate, and of the elect cannot be known: and we grant that this knowledge of assurance is not given to man by any immediate revelation. But we affirm, that every faithful man may be, and ought to be *assured* of his own salvation; and that by the wonderful work of regeneration wrought in him by the holy spirit; who guides every faithful man into the secret counsel of GOD's eternal election, and there lets him see, not the state of other men; but his own name written in heaven. For they, who are truly regenerate, are truly called: they, who are truly called, are justified: they, who are justified are, (that is to say, they shall be as certainly, as if they were already) glorified. See *Rom. viii. 29, 30.* Hence it is, that the scripture speaketh of the faithful, as of those, who have already attain'd eternal salvation, *John iii. 8.* Because the regeneration of this life, and the eternal glory of the life to come, are not two distinct states or conditions; but only different degrees of the same condition; eternal salvation being nothing else, but the perfection of holiness and happiness, of which the faithful receive a part in this life, by way of earnest for the whole. Of whom it may be said, that they having already one foot in heaven, and thus got possession of it, need not doubt of their salvation; but may confidently say with St. *John, we know*, or are certain, *that we are translated* already, *from death to life*, not by any immediate revelation, but *because we love the brethren*, or feel ourselves endu'd with renew'd holiness, of which the love of GOD is a principal part: and also with the apostle to the *Romans, I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities;*

neither

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neither things present, nor things to come, can separate me from the love of GOD in CHRIST.

It may be farther objected, that altho' true regeneration be a certain forerunner of salvation; yet it is difficult for a man to know, whether his regeneration be true, or only a shadow and resemblance, which is often in the reprobate; and, altho' he shall have faith and holiness at one time, he may lose and want them at another, and so dispossess himself of that state of salvation wherein he was. Therefore in both these cases, *he that thinketh he standeth, ought to fear lest he fall*, rather than boast of the certainty of his salvation.

This no doubt is a good caution against presumption. But let it at the same time be understood, that *true regeneration* is not so light a matter, neither doth it make so small a change in a man, but that it may be plainly discern'd where it is present. Besides regeneration is not such an uncertain thing as to be lost; but wheresoever it is, there it will appear at one time or at another: and where it once appeareth, there it always abideth. For, as regeneration is a total and supernatural change of the mind, will, affections, thoughts, words and deeds of a man, it cannot be hid, or doubtful for any long time; but will shew itself both to the eyes of other men, and much more to the conscience of the believer himself. The infirmities of the flesh and sin, which appear in the life of a believer, may make the sincerity of his religion and virtue doubtful to others: but the inward work and motions of the spirit, which govern his heart, will convince him that he is a child of GOD. It is granted, that a man truly regenerate may have his faith much shaken, and the holiness of his life greatly blemished by the force of temptation, and thus may he for a time be deprived in some measure, or even wholly, of this assurance or certainty of salvation: yet many
examples

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examples amongst the saints shew that this dereliction does not hinder such a one from having it at another time, and even all the days of his life.

To conclude this interesting subject. This assurance of our salvation, neither is, nor can be to a believer any motive to sin, and to a dissolute life; with which it cannot stand. For, as it is gotten by holiness, whereby a man seeth that he is endued with the spirit of God, and effectually called to believe the gospel; so it is lost by a sinful and wicked life. Because, as the tree is known by its fruit, a wicked course of life sheweth that a man is destitute of true faith, and of God's spirit.

There is no peace to the wicked. All their enjoyment is a mere dream and delusion, arising from the forgetfulness and insensibility of their condition. When they go on to do such things as they can't answer to their own minds, they must needs be self condemn'd as far as any conscience is alive in them. But they who love the law of the Lord, have great peace in their own minds, and with heaven. There is no such sweet satisfaction, as in the way of our duty; where we are fed with the continual feast of a chearful conscience, revived with the light of God's countenance, and heartened on with the hopes of heavenly glory.

However, it is not every sin that can break our peace, if it only remains in us, and is not allowed by us; tho' our hearts may condemn us, the gospel will acquit us. If there be no such wickedness, as ruins all the hopes of heaven; the God of all grace will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss; nor damn the believer in his sin, for every miscarriage of life. Let holiness predominate and keep uppermost in the soul, and there will be peace of mind, hearts ease, and full assurance of salvation.

THE PRAYER.

MOST powerful and gracious Lord God, the support and defence of thy faithful servants, against those evils to which the frailty of their present state, or the violence of their enemies does expose them, make me by thy grace a fit vessel for thy mercy, order my goings, and compass me about with that favour, that thou always shewest to the righteous, and by which thou makest his way acceptable to thyself: that the calamities and afflictions of this world may never interrupt my duty to thee, nor brake my trust and confidence in thy gracious promises and protection. I know that tho' I fall, I shall not be cast away: that if I leave not thee first, thou wilt never leave me, nor forsake me: that if I flee from evil, and do the thing that is good, I shall dwell with thee for evermore: that thou wilt not forsake such as are godly; but wilt preserve them unto life eternal: and in this assurance of my salvation, I commit myself to thy protection, thro' the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

BOOK THE THIRD.
OF
GOD THE HOLY GHOST.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Nature, Office, Gifts and Benefits
of the HOLY GHOST.*

 S to the proper *nature* of this divine Spirit, it is not my intention to pry into farther than it is plainly and clearly describ'd in the revealed word of God. For, the pride and vanity of learned men have often confounded their understandings, while they have presumed to be wise above what is written, intruding into those things, which they have not seen, and have made shipwreck of their faith, by attempting to explain what God hath not revealed.

Since the essence and inmost nature of the *smallest* body can't be perfectly understood by us: since the life of the *meanest* animal is beyond all our philosophy to explain: since the nature of the *soul of man* is still a more unsearchable mystery; and the nature and essence of angels is still far more unathomable

athomable than any of these; how then should vain man presume to search out the nature of the *spirit of God*!

When we have tired out our capacities in vain speculations, they can amount to no more than human curiosities: and if labour'd with a good intention, must not exceed the bounds of, nor pretend to have discovered greater mysteries, or more clear ideas of the divine persons, than are expressly revealed in scripture concerning such matters. Thus we find great reason to bless and praise the wisdom and justice of the good God, who has made the meanest christian as capable of understanding his mysteries, as the most learned disputants in the world. Therefore

Concerning the *nature* of the HOLY GHOST. We are taught to believe, "that he is a divine person, "the third person in the Trinity, equal in glory, "and co-eternal in majesty with the father and the "son: that he is uncreate, incomprehensible and "eternal: that he is almighty, God and Lord, and "giver of life; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding from the Father and the "Son; who with the Father and the Son together "is worshipped and glorified: who spoke by the "prophets, and abideth with us for ever."

To prove the *personality* of the HOLY GHOST, we need only have recourse to those characters of *sanctifier, reprover, witness and comforter*; by which he is named in holy writ. In *John* xvi. 8. we read of a *comforter*, who, *when he is come, will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment—will guide us into all truth—will shew us things to come—and teach us all things.* See *John* xiv. 16, 17, 26. And if to *teach* be a personal character, we must allow that to *speak* is a personal character also, and applicable to the HOLY GHOST: of whom it is written in *Mark* xiii. 11. *Whatever shall be given you in that*

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that hour, says JESUS to his disciples, *that speak ye; for it is not you that speak, but the HOLY GHOST.*

If we read *Acts* the vth and 32d ver. he is there mentioned in the personal character of a *witness*; and also in the xxth ch. and 23d ver. Again these scriptures, *your body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST*, 1 Cor. vi. 19. compared with *John* xiv. 17. and the apostles being *sent forth by the HOLY GHOST*, *Acts* xiii. 4. shew that he is a person, that can *dwell* in a place, and can *send* one upon a message. The like is confirmed by those passages, where he is described acting with sovereign will and pleasure, as, *it seem'd good to the HOLY GHOST*, &c. *Acts* xv. 28. where he prohibits and forbids, as, *the apostles were forbidden by the HOLY GHOST to preach the word in Asia*, *Acts* xvi. 6. where he is said to constitute or appoint any one to execute an office, as in *Acts* xx. 28. where he is said to have *made overseers*.

The same divine word further informs us, that he is a divine person, in an ineffable manner deriving his being, proceeding from, or being sent forth from the Father and the Son; whereby he is, and upon which account he is stiled, in a singular and peculiar manner, *the spirit of God*, and *the spirit of CHRIST*; because CHRIST being ascended, the gifts distributed by the same spirit, who spake by the prophets, were according to the promise of the Father, pour'd forth in much greater plenty and abundance than before.

If in any passage of the sacred oracles we shall find the *person* of the HOLY SPIRIT represented and spoken of, as the *power* of the Father; such scripture means no more than this; that the Father works all miracles, and bestows all gifts *by him*. Nor can those texts be understood any otherwise than of a *real person*, in which it is expressed, that he (in the original, *that person*) *the spirit of truth is come*, *John* xiv. 13. That *he maketh intercession for us*,
Rom.

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Rom. viii. 26. That *he divideth spiritual gifts to every one severally, as he willeth*, 1 Cor. xii. 11. which and more such texts do plainly declare the *holy spirit* to be a *real person*.

The HOLY GHOST is not only a distinct person from the Father and the Son; but he is GOD equal with the Father and the Son. Thus *Peter* witnesseth, where he said, *Ananias, why hath satan filled thine heart to lie to the HOLY GHOST? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto GOD*, *Acts* v. 3, 4. where he is called GOD, not only in the proper sense of the word, but in opposition to the creature.

The HOLY GHOST is also proved to be GOD, from the divine attributes ascrib'd to him in the sacred Records. In *Hebrews* ix. 14. he is acknowledged to be *eternal*. In *Psalms* cxxxix. 7. we find his immensity or omnipresence described in an elegant manner, for, *whither shall I go from thy SPIRIT*, shews that there is no place where the *spirit of GOD* or the HOLY GHOST is not; and where the apostle writes, that *the SPIRIT searcheth all things; yea the deep things of GOD*, 1 Cor. ii. 10. he beareth witness of his *omniscience*.

The deity of the HOLY GHOST may be further evinced from his performing those works which are proper to GOD alone. *The SPIRIT of GOD*, at the creation of the world, *moved upon the face of the waters*, *Gen.* i. 2. And *Job* not only says, that by his *spirit GOD hath garnished the heavens*, *ch.* xxvi. 13. but *Elibu* acknowledgeth that he himself was made by the SPIRIT of GOD, *ch.* xxxiii. 4. We also find this divine person doing extraordinary or miraculous works, which are equivalent to creation. Such were the *gifts* subservient to the propagation of the gospel, and attributed to the HOLY GHOST by the apostle, where he says, that *there are diversities of gifts by the same SPIRIT; and differences of administrations, but the same LORD; and diversities of*

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of operations, but it is the same GOD, which worketh all in all, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6. where it is declared upon the best authority, not only that the gifts and extraordinary operations, which some were enabled to put forth in the exercise of their ministry, were all from the spirit; but that this same spirit is both GOD and LORD; who having an infinite power, bestows these blessings to whom, and after what manner he pleaseth: for as the same divine penman adds at the eleventh verse, all these worketh that one and the self same spirit, dividing to every man severally, as he will.

The several passages in holy writ, wherein we read of the HOLY GHOST's sending or empowering ministers to preach the gospel; a mission which no one has a right to assume and exercise, unless sent by GOD himself; is a further proof of his divinity. See *Acts* xxii. 2. xx. 28. xvi. 9, 10, &c. and those are confirm'd by these texts, which record the *unction*, conferred on our Saviour by the spirit, to perform the office of a mediator in his human nature. (Compare *Isaiah* lxi. 1. with *Luke* iv. 18. 19. in which nature the son of GOD being obliged to submit and yield unto the Father, he was authorized and qualified to perform that obedience by the HOLY GHOST. This was a most extraordinary work, and the glory redounding from it, to the HOLY GHOST, is of that nature, as to convince us that he is a divine person.

Again: the work of grace in the souls of believers, being ascrib'd unto the HOLY GHOST, as well as to the Father and Son, both as to the beginning, progress and completion of it; a work of GOD's almighty power, and consequently too great to be performed by any creature, is a certain proof of his divinity.

But the right which the HOLY GHOST has to divine worship, puts the divinity of his person out

of all doubt. His right thereunto might be evinced from the divine perfections ascribed unto him in scripture. But if we enter farther into this enquiry, it will be found that there are some passages in the new Testament, which make the HOLY GHOST the real object of prayer: as in *Acts* i. 24, 25. where the apostles being met to chuse one into their number to fill the place of *Judas Iscariot*, prayed to the third person in the godhead, saying, *Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship.* Under the same appellation of *Lord*, we find the apostle *Paul* offering up his prayer to him in behalf of his *Thessalonian* converts, *The Lord*, says he, in *1 Thess.* iii. 12, 13. *make you to encrease and abound in love one towards another, to the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before GOD our Father, at the coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.* And again in *2 Thess.* iii. 5. *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of GOD, and into the patient waiting for CHRIST.* In both which prayers the HOLY GHOST seems to be the person prayed unto, and is plainly distinguished from the Father and the Son. But there is another scripture, in which it is more evident that the same apostle prays to the HOLY GHOST, together with the Father and the Son: *the grace of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and the love of GOD, and the communion of the HOLY GHOST* (says he) *be with you all*, *2 Cor.* xiii. 14. Where, in that part of this prayer, which respects the HOLY GHOST, is contained an humble supplication, that he would please to manifest himself to them, or that he would communicate to them those graces, which they stood in need of, for their edification and salvation.

How this divine person proceeded from the Father and the son is not revealed, and therefore not a proper object of our enquiry. But that he did
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fo proceed is evident from the sacred record, where it written, that *he was sent by the Son from the Father*, and that he *did proceed from the Father*, John xv. 26. And again, *God hath sent forth the spirit of his son*, Gal. iv. 6. See also *John xvi. 7, 14.*

This was the person, who inspired the prophets of old, to foretell the sufferings of CHRIST, and the glory that should follow: who afterwards was sent forth in a more particular and extraordinary manner to be the comforter, director, guide and instructor of the apostles, to lead them into all truth; to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever CHRIST had before said unto them; to support them against the power of the world; to instruct them what to answer before their persecutors; to be the great witnesses of the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST, by working signs and wonders, and mighty works, by inspiring the apostles with the gift of tongues, and dividing to their followers diversities of gifts; and finally to continue with all good christians even unto the end of the world, as the great sanctifier of the hearts of men; assisting them with his grace; admonishing them with his holy influence; working with them, and inspiring them with his good gifts, and helping the infirmity of their prayers, with an energy that cannot be expressed.

We have a particular account how this divine spirit was given to the disciples of JESUS CHRIST. *When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting: and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the HOLY GHOST, Acts ii. 1, &c.* who gave them such miraculous gifts and powers, as enabled them to speak the languages of all the earth, that they might be able swiftly to propagate the gospel to
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all nations; and to confirm their doctrine by miraculous cures of corporeal diseases. All which was done to fulfil the words of *John the Baptist*, and of CHRIST himself: for *the Baptist*, being interrogated concerning his ministerial office, modestly and plainly confessed, *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the HOLY GHOST and with fire, i. e. with the HOLY GHOST*, descending visibly in the appearance of fire, and continuing upon them by an assistance, as much more powerful and efficacious, than what *John Baptist* pretended to; as fire is more powerful and more purifying than water. And a little before his ascension JESUS, alluding to this prophetic declaration of his forerunner, promised his disciples, that *John truly baptized with water*; but they should be baptized with the HOLY GHOST *not many days after*, Acts i. 5.

Every christian is still baptized with the HOLY GHOST, as well as with water, notwithstanding those extraordinary miraculous operations, given to the first preachers of the gospel, be ceased: and his internal gifts and graces are to continue with the faithful unto the end of the world. If any one has not received these gifts of the HOLY GHOST, it may still be ask'd him in the apostolic language, *Unto what then are you baptized?* If any man has not in himself the spirit of CHRIST, so as to sanctify him in his heart; if he does not shew forth in his life the fruits of the spirit, by works of righteousness and true piety;—if his heart be not sanctified by this spirit of holiness;—if his mind approves not, and delights not in things spiritual;—if his will obeys not the good motions of this divine assistant;—if the actions of his life be not conformable to the commands of GOD, revealed to us in holy scripture by the inspiration of the HOLY

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GHOST; to what purpose then was such a person baptized?

The *gifts* and *benefits* of the HOLY GHOST are to be consider'd distinctly, either as *mere external, miraculous powers*, such as the apostles received on the day of *Pentecost*; of which it is said, and the apostle declares, that the spirit of GOD so *distributes to every man severally, as he willeth*, and so maketh one to differ from another, that nothing at all of this kind of gifts depends in any measure upon the will of the persons themselves: and therefore, as by having these gifts, no man was the *better christian*; so no man by wanting them, was the worse; these gifts being bestow'd not for the benefit of the *persons operating*, but for the conversion of *others*.

There were particular powers and qualifications for particular offices, called the *gifts* of the spirit: of which the apostle thus writes: *To every one of us is given grace (or a gift) according to the measure of the gift of CHRIST, &c.* Eph. iv. 7—11. However we are not to presume upon having these gifts: for the goodness of a christian does not consist in having *this* or *that* particular gift; but in making a *right use* of the talent, whatever it was they had receiv'd from the *holy spirit*: for it was GOD, that dealt to every man the measure of faith; or, according to his own pleasure, distributed to every one a particular trust or employment, committed to each one's fidelity or faithfulness. *Having therefore gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us; whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith, or according to the proportion of the gift entrusted to our fidelity: or, if it be ministry, let us wait on our ministring; or he that teacheth, on teaching: or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity or liberally: he that ruleth with diligence: he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness,* *ibid.*

We also read of other gifts of the spirit, which upon due reflection will appear to be *particular* and *personal* advantageous circumstances in the particular constitutions of the human body; in the natural frame and temper of the human mind; or in our external state of life, and condition in the world: by which we are particularly fitted for the exercise of some particular offices; or for the continuing in some particular manner and course of life: according to that of the apostle saying, *I would that all men were even as I myself, but every man hath his proper gift of GOD [to fit him for his state or condition of life] one after this manner; another after that.* Therefore, as said above, with respect to these gifts: the goodness of a christian does not consist in his having *this* or *that* particular qualification; but in his conducting himself *suitably* to those qualifications, where-with it shall please GOD to bless him. For, they are the effects of GOD's pleasure, which it is our duty to obey and fulfil with all our strength. But,

These are not the gifts and benefits wherewith the HOLY GHOST is said to abide with us for ever. They are merely *personal*: whereas his universal presence with all men, is to be sought in righteousness, holiness, peace, meekness, temperance, and other virtues that are the general and unlimited fruits or gifts of the spirit of GOD: who tenders them unto all men, and by them always, and for ever shall dwell in their mortal bodies, *except they be reprobates.* For, as every person that embraceth the gospel and is baptized, has received the promise of the HOLY GHOST; it is wholly his own fault, and his own wickedness only, if, by that assistance, he does not bring forth the fruits of the spirit.

The assistance of the spirit is absolutely necessary to enable men to bring forth fruit meet for the kingdom of heaven: but then, because it is the *assistance* only, and not the *compulsive work* of the spirit

spirit alone; and because that assistance is always afforded to men in proportion to the sincere endeavours of their own will, co-operating with the gracious influences of the spirit of GOD; it is justly charged upon man, as his own *fault*, if he wants those virtues and graces of the spirit, which, were it not for his own wilful rejecting its good motions, the good spirit of GOD would never be wanting in assisting him to practise. *Examine your own selves*, says the apostle to the *Corinthians*, *whether ye be in the faith. Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that JESUS CHRIST is in you, or that the spirit of CHRIST dwelleth in you, except ye be reprobates*; or, except by your own perverse wickedness ye drive him from you.

As it is as necessary for the production of fruits on the earth, that there should be *good ground* to receive the seed or root, as that the seed and root be good, which is sown and planted: so it is as necessary, in order to bring forth the *fruits of the spirit*, that the *will* and *good disposition* of the person himself, concur with the good motions of the spirit; as it is *necessary*, that the *spirit* affords his assistance, to enable the *person* effectually to fulfil his own good dispositions.

GOD, on his part, is always ready to assist us; and no more denies his HOLY SPIRIT to such, as worthily ask him, than a tender father would give his son a scorpion, if he asked him an egg. But men by their own unworthiness, and resisting his good motions, do quench and grieve, and drive him from them: and then, it is most justly charged upon themselves, as *their own fault*, if they have not in them the spirit of GOD. Which yet, whenever it is bestow'd, we are to accept of, as the *free gift* of GOD, who originally had no obligation, but his own goodness, to confer it on *any*; yet now it is every man's own fault, if he receives it not: be-
cause

cause GOD never withholds this his free gift, but from those only, who are not sincerely willing to co-operate with it.

When therefore we read of *justification by the grace of GOD*, let us not fancy, that, in such a case, the grace of GOD operates upon men, as mere machines; or, that he so *forcibly acts* upon them, as to make *their acting* for themselves *needless*. But let it be understood to declare, that it is owing to the *free grace*, and *undeserved* favour of GOD, made known in the gospel, that the imperfect fruits of righteousness, which by our best endeavours we are able to bring forth, are accepted of him unto justification; and that the assistance of the good spirit of GOD is always at hand, to strengthen and to enable us to bring forth the fruits of the spirit.

Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty: there is the spiritual mind, that brings life and peace: and there is the heavenly guide, to lead us into all truth: not only to point out our way; but also to incline us to love it, and to enable us to follow it. His spirit witnesseth with our spirit, that we are the *children of GOD*; emboldens us to cry *Abba, Father*; stirs us up to prayer, and helps us in it, to make an offering acceptable to GOD, and an adventure of happy account to our souls. Shall it not then also excite my thankfulness to GOD for his unspeakable gift? That I, who am so unworthy, the least of his mercies, should be enriched with the greatest of his blessings: that his free spirit, which bloweth where it listeth, should vouchsafe to refresh my soul; and that I should receive such peculiar tokens of his love, who have been guilty of so many transgressions against his holy commandments. What manner of love is this, that the spirit of GOD should not only be given to me, but so settled upon me, as not to depart from me. For which I build upon the faithful words of his

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gracious covenant, *Isaiah* lix. 21. and may I for ever give him the honour due to his great name.

T H E P R A Y E R.

O Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort, it is thy glory to do good ; and with thy goodness to cover and to conquer our evil. Thy good spirit is a gift too great for me, a provoking finner, to receive : but not too great a good for thee, the Lord of power and love, to give. O pour out that holy spirit upon me, without which I cannot know thy way, nor do thy will. And let the spirit of the Lord be my blessed portion, to dwell in me, and to reign over me ; and to be my teacher and guide, my sanctifier and comforter, that I may have a right judgment in all things, and evermore rejoice in his holy comfort, thro' the merits of CHRIST JESUS, my saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

C H A P. II.

*Of the Inhabitation of the HOLY GHOST:
Of his striving with Man : Of grieving
the Spirit of God : And of Joy in the
HOLY GHOST.*

THAT all true believers, the living members of CHRIST's body, are endued with the spirit of GOD, so as to be the temple or habitation of the HOLY GHOST, we have a strong assurance in *Romans* viii. 9. and *1 Cor.* iii. 16. founded upon the promise of our blessed Saviour himself, where he comforteth his disciples with these words, *I will not leave*

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you comfortless. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you, ch. xiv. 10, &c. which is verified not only in the faithful collectively, as conjoined in a mystical body, like so many stones to make up the same building; but also distributively, of every believer in particular, to whom it is said, *What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST, which is in you?*

Being thus assured of the indwelling of the spirit of GOD, let us consider the great honour to be thus highly favour'd with such a divine guest; not only to have the HOLY GHOST for our guest, but to be made his fixed residence, where he sets up his rest, and is even as another soul in a soul, to actuate and quicken it, and to be the very life of it: and tho' he may often for a while withdraw, yet he never will totally leave it.

This temple is erected *without hands*, like that in the heavens: such a work is above the power of mortal men. It is the Lord's own doing, *who creates us in CHRIST JESUS*, Eph. ii. 10. He is the grand architect, that contrived, and the builder, that laid the foundation, and perfected the blessed work; for, thus it is written, the saints are builded *for an habitation of GOD by the spirit*, ver. 22. The same GOD who gave us a being, gives us this new and better being, and a capacity to receive his own blessed majesty.

As this speaks heavenly comfort to have the great GOD bow his heavens and come down to us, and the comforter himself to dwell in us; the least of whose consolations outweigh the biggest joys of the world; because they are comforts that enter, and root themselves in the heart, and such will

stick to a dying man, and go along with a departing soul, and stay by it to all eternity: so it should be our care to keep our bodies unspotted from the world, and to have our conversation in heaven. For, it is not enough for this temple to look well unto the men of this world; but it must be so adorn'd within, as to please him, that looks upon the heart.

The sense of this should influence us to purge this temple, by repentance and prayer, till pride and lust, fraud and malice, excess and wantonness, unbelief and superstition, be found no more therein. It is known, that the *spirit of God* dwelleth in the body, and shall no care be taken to avoid every thing, that may distaste and affront the heavenly inhabitant? The tongue should be employ'd, as the bell of the temple, to sound his praise; and the heart should be kept, as the *sanctum sanctorum*, where no iniquity, nor unclean thing is suffered to enter. If the body be GOD's house, it is also the house of prayer; where not only words, but the heart must be found out before the Lord, that every believer may, thro' his grace, so search and cleanse the house, so watch and keep the whole man, soul and body; that the Lord may be pleased to say, *This is my house: here will I dwell; for I have a delight therein: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

For this end, and to supply, by GOD's grace, the defect of human endeavours; amongst other many, great and gracious methods, that our heavenly father is pleased to use for the reducing and saving of poor sinners, he has vouchsafed to ordain, that his holy spirit shall not only abide with and dwell in man, but also *strive* with him, plead with him, convince him with strong reasons, and almost forcibly break in upon him, and by an overpowering energy, bring him back from the proneness of nature, to a due submission to his spiritual advice. A proceeding, without

out which no sinner can hope to continue stedfast in the ways of godliness, nor recover the state, from which he has fallen by the allurements of sin, the craft and subtilty of the devil, or by his own carnal will and frailness.

The *blessed spirit* strives many ways with sinners : as, By his word, which is in a peculiar manner *the administration of the spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 8. By his ministers, whom he endows with gifts and abilities for the work, whereunto he appoints them. By darting in beams of light amongst the ignorant. By commands, rebukes and threats, to awe and to reform the disobedient. By promises, invitations, and beseechings to draw, to confirm and to establish the lukewarm and careless. By corrections to drive us out of our sins; and by comforts to win us into, and to encourage us in his holy ways. In such diverse manners, and by manifold impressions is the same spirit pleased to work all in all.

But sinful man must not presume too much upon this assistance; for, there will be an end of this probation and striving. It will not last always. Tho' he calls and offers, importunes and negotiates with reason and human frailties; and will not (for our reluctance and obstinacy) throw us away presently; yet the time comes on apace, when all his gracious overtures will for ever cease. Therefore, when we find a present application, let us not put it off upon a future expectation. The present opportunity is all we have to depend upon. If we contend any longer, and slip the happy moment of the spirit's call, he may teach us to our cost, that he will not bear our manners for ever, but leave us to perish, for want of that grace which we have rejected, and without which we cannot be saved.

Hence it is that we are to dread how we *vex* and *grieve* the holy spirit of GOD. For, tho' the divine nature is above all molestation, and not capable of

being disturbed by any passion; yet it is possible to give a great distaste and high offence to the holy one. As mortal man, when exasperated and touched to the quick with ingratitude, injury and unkindness, signifies his resentment and grievance, by giving marks of his displeasure, turning away his face, and withdrawing his favour from the offender, and making him to understand how sensible he is of the ill usage received, and resolved to

- give him a smart perception, how ill he has done in taking such unbecoming liberties, and transgressing so grossly the laws of friendship and justice: so the Lord upon our grievous provocations, withdraws his pleased countenance, turns away his face, and casts us out of his presence. He frowns upon us, and reveals his wrath against us, when wearied with our iniquities. See *Amos* ii. 13. *Isa.* xliii. 24.

On the contrary, they that do the will of God, will have *joy in the HOLY GHOST*. Converts and renew'd christians, that have received the HOLY GHOST; made their escape out of the damnable state; have found favour, and received blessings from above, they have the happiest occasion to rejoice in the Lord evermore, and again to rejoice; doubling the joy, as they have received double from the Lord's hand, even deliverance from hell, and the heavenly inheritance among his saints. Great is their joy and peace in believing, and in hope of the glory of God. Yea, it is a joy in God's salvation; not only as reserved for them, and promised to them; but already begun in them. It is a joy peculiar to the regenerate, and which the world can't deprive them of: A joy in the HOLY GHOST; for, it is a *fruit of the spirit*, Gal. v. 22. and wrought by the spirit of God: A rejoicing in the things that he hath wrought and done for the soul; rejoicing in his presence with it, and his grace be-

flow'd upon it; as also rejoicing within the bounds that he hath set, even in a spiritual and godly manner.

The godly may for a season be oppressed by divers temptations; and sometimes dejected thro' the failings of their faith, and the prevailings of their corruptions: yet still they retain the ground of rejoicing: and as phyfic in the natural body is in order to keep it in health: so the godly sorrow in the spiritual man is in order to preserve heavenly joy. To feel the heart so tender as to relent for sin, makes the believer much more pleased, than the fool can possibly be, who makes a mock of sin: and the joy of a conquest over sin, far exceeds all the satisfaction that can be taken in it.

How flashy and momentary is all the joy and triumph of the wicked? nothing but a frothy scum, that ariseth from the creatures, and what the remembrance of God and the world to come, strikes into the shadow of death. So at last it will leave them more sorrowful and dejected, than if they never had known it. Thus the most abandon'd sinners, that are thought to lead the merriest lives, are really the greatest strangers to the most substantial joys; rejoicing in nothing that shall continue, and what shall bring them many thousand times more sorrow, than ever it gave them comfort. But let a soul, that feels the spirit of God favouring his pious intentions, enabling him to do the works of the spirit; accepting his sincere endeavours; conducting him to eternal life; shedding abroad his love in the heart, and reviving it with the witness of his spirit, and the hopes of his glory; let it declare, whether any joys of the world are comparable to those of religion and virtue? O, what joyful gladness is sown for the upright in heart! and tho' there is a waiting time for the crop; yet in due season he shall see it, and come again with rejoicing, bring-

ing his sheaves with him. Many lightnings of joy he has upon the way : but fulness of joy shall be at the end. The ways of godliness are ways of pleafantness, and the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.

T H E P R A Y E R.

O Eternal Father, who hast ordained that the bodies of thy servants shall be kept fit and meet to entertain thy holy spirit, that he may comfort, help and guide them in thy faith and fear ; send the spirit of thy Son into my heart, to dwell and abide with me, and to work and rule in me, to purge out my dross, to purify my soul, to quicken me in thy way, to enable me for thy work, to draw me from this world unto thee, my God, and to make me rejoice and glory with the redeemed of the Lord ; thro' JESUS CHRIST, my Saviour. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

Of the Blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST.

THIS is what many learned and pious Christians have and do erroneously call the *sin against the HOLY GHOST*; and thereby occasion many doubts and distractions about the nature and effect of it, to the great injury and disquiet of many sincere and good christians : and therefore I shall undertake its explanation with greater care and desire to clear up those doubts, and to deliver them from those distractions.

The reason why the learned have contributed to this mistake, may be accounted for in their attempts to define or to describe this blasphemy, by ideas arising

arising from their own zealous conceits, instead of seeking for its description in the canon of the holy scripture.

In the definition of a sin of so heinous a nature, direct and evident proof of GOD's word is requisite. It is not enough to enquire what sins are most desperate and deadly, and then to conclude, that such must be the *sins* against the HOLY GHOST. For the more dreadful a sin is found to be, the more fearful we ought to be also in the charging or fixing of it upon a special crime, or particular person; as the schoolmen have done, who have made *six* differences of this sin, without any colour of authority from the word of GOD for so doing: and I could wish that some of our most learned divines in the reformed churches had not also started aside from scripture, and given such intricate and contradictory definitions of this sin, as tend only to the perplexing of the tender consciences of weak christians. For whose sake, and for the glory of GOD, I undertake this point.

The scripture account of this sin, commonly so called, is as far as I can collect, that *the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST, was an evil speaking or slandering of the miracles of our Saviour CHRIST, by those, who tho' they were convinced by the miracles, to believe that such works could not be done but by the power of GOD: yet they did maliciously say, that they were wrought by the power of the devil.*

Where I forbear to call it the *sin*, and name it the *blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST*; agreeable to the word of CHRIST and his evangelists: who, tho' every blasphemy is a sin, no where names this crime by any other term than the *blasphemy*. Neither is there any such name as *the sin against the HOLY GHOST* to be found in all the scripture: yet it appears both in *Matthew* and *Mark*, that there was just occasion offered for our Saviour to have named it

it the *sin against the HOLY GHOST*, where he compares it with the *sin against the son of man*. But he forbears to use any other term than the *blasphemy*: as if thereby he intended to teach us that this crime consists only in cursed speaking or blaspheming. Why then do we search for another way of speech, and not be contented to speak of this offence against the HOLY GHOST, in the self-same terms the great oracle of our faith has expressed it?

The texts wherein the *blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST* is mentioned are in *Matt. xii. 31. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST. In Mark iii. 28. All sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the HOLY GHOST hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. And in Luke xii. 10. Whosoever shall speak a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the HOLY GHOST, it shall not be forgiven him.* And while we confine our ideas to these expressions, there's no fear of deviating from the truth.

Here then let it be observed, that *blasphemy* is, in its proper and immediate signification, *a speaking against another*, as might more largely be explained from the import of the Greek word used by *Matthew* and *Luke*, which in the original is *a hurting or blasting the fame, credit, reputation, or blaming of another*.

But to pass from the name to the thing itself, we may observe by the coherence of the texts, that the *blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST* was spoken by our Saviour concerning the *scribes and pharisees*; who having seen *JESUS* cast out a devil, blind and dumb, to the amazement of the people, said, He casteth out devils by *Belzebub*, the prince of the devils: and that he had an unclean spirit. Which speech of the

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Pharisees to slander the miracles of *JESUS*, wrought by the power of the divine spirit, he distinguished by the name of *blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST*, to convey a more detestable idea of the crime, which traduced that power, by which he, in his human nature, wrought miracles for the confirmation of his doctrine.

The end, for which miracles were wrought, was evidently to prove, that *JESUS* was the *Messiah*; that the multitude beholding with their eyes the works which he wrought, might thereby be engaged to believe the doctrine which he taught; as appears more fully from the following passages of holy writ. *The works that I do in my father's name, bear witness of me. If I do not the works of my father, believe me not: tho' ye believe me not, believe the works, John x. Believe me, that I am in the father, or else believe me for the very work's sake, John xiv.* When the disciples of *John* asked, *Art thou he?* *JESUS* answer'd, *Go shew John those things that you see and hear, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, &c. Matt. xi.* These and many other places shew, that the working of miracles was an act of the most glorious manifestation of the power and majesty of *GOD*: by which, at the first, the simplest men were led by their outward sense, to that great mystery of inward faith in *CHRIST*, their redeemer. See *John* iv. 29. and *John* ix. Therefore, it was the most malicious slander, that could be invented by men, who were eye witnesses of such miracles, as did make them know that *CHRIST* was a teacher come from *GOD*, to blaspheme that power, by which those miracles were wrought, and to say, they were done by the help of the devil: for thereby they endeavoured, as much as in them lay, to destroy the very principles of faith, and to prevent the first propagation of the gospel, to the universal injury of all mankind; and tho' these *Pharisees* were not christians, and therefore could

could not fall from the faith, which they never had; yet they did know and believe, that CHRIST *was a teacher come from GOD*; according to what our Saviour told them in *John vii. 28. Ye both know me, and whence I am.* They did not believe in him, as a saviour, but as a great prophet sent from GOD. They trusted to be saved by their law: and because JESUS taught such things, as did abrogate that law, in which they so much gloried, they were so malicious to his doctrine, which they did not believe, that they did speak evil of his miracles, which they did believe, lest the people, by approving of his miracles, should have faith in his doctrine.

Let it also be observed, that this crime is properly called *the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST*: because the miracles, wrought by JESUS, who *did cast out devils by the spirit of GOD*, Matt. x. 28. and by his disciples, to whom he communicated that power, were done by the power of *the Spirit or HOLY GHOST*; at it is written in *1 Cor. xii. the working of miracles is by the same spirit.*

The *blasphemy or sin against the son of man*, was the looking upon CHRIST as a mere man, and disgracefully charging his conversation, when they said, *Behold a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend to publicans and sinners*: but the *blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST* was, when they beholding the *miracles of CHRIST*, did enviously and maliciously ascribe those works to the devil, which they did know and believe to be done *by the power of GOD.*

So that, as well from the passages in the gospels, wherein *the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST* is mentioned; as from the general silence of the other apostolic writers, who have not once mentioned this *blasphemy* in their epistles and other writings, it does not appear safe to ascribe the committing of this crime to any, but to the scribes and pharisees, and their followers or associates, and that it is probable, that

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the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST is not a sin committable by any Christian, that lived not in the time of our Saviour. Yet may they tremble, as bordering upon it, and ready to drop into it, who make it a common and light thing, to withstand the strivings of the HOLY SPIRIT, and contract a habit of despising all his gracious offers to check them in their evil ways, and their boldness to engage in forbidden things.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, 'tis grievous unto me to remember all the ways by which I have offended thee. O give me an humbling sense of my folly and my sin, I beseech thee, good Lord; and forgive me all the heinous guilt that I have contracted by withstanding thy holy motions, despising thy gracious assistance, and rashly enjoying those things which thou hast forbidden; and make me dissatisfied and uneasy with myself, till I become pleasing to my GOD: that it may be grievous as death to me, wilfully to offend thee, and that I may account it my life and my joy to will and live with thee, and to delight myself in the Lord, and be acceptable to my GOD. *Amen.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the Limitations of Human Knowledge.

ONE principal benefit of the HOLY GHOST is to guide us into the way of all truth. But man is so proud and vain, as never to be satisfied with that proportion of knowledge allotted to every one by the wisdom and goodness of their creator. He was no sooner created, but the desire of more knowledge

ledge, than human nature was to be entrusted with from heaven, provoked God to drive both *Adam* and *Eve* out of paradise, *Gen.* iii.

This propensity after forbidden, unnecessary, and unattainable knowledge, was so engrafted in the corrupt nature of man, that we may ascribe thereunto all the errors and idolatries, which dishonoured God, and provoked him to punish the vain and proud offenders. And *Moses* observed this foible to encrease so much amongst the *Israelites*, whom the Lord had chosen for his own people, that he exhorts them strenuously to lay aside vain speculations, and only to obey and observe the revealed will of God, in the search of their duty towards God and man. *The secret things*, (says he in *Deut.* xxix. ult.) *belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* A passage, which they would do well to consider and practise, who in the *christian* church, not only desire to pry into the hidden and unrevealed decrees, counsels and purposes of God; but desire vehemently to impose their opinions, which are at best only problematical, concerning *those secret things*, and persecute others, if in their power, for rejecting their inventions, and for conscientiously adhering unto, and doing those things that are plainly revealed.

Therefore, it is our duty, when we attempt to seek and search out by wisdom, concerning all things that the largeness of our soul desireth to know, not to depart from the study of the law of God, by prying into those things, which none but his divine understanding can comprehend, and his infinite wisdom has not thought proper to reveal.

When we are pressed with a desire to find out some new thing; it must first be consider'd, whether that knowledge we desire, will terminate in such

such useful and possible perfections as are suitable to the condition and circumstances of our nature; or to be attain'd by the improvement of the faculties God hath bestow'd upon us, under the direction of the holy spirit. For, when our knowledge exceeds these bounds, it terminates only in pride and vanity.

The almighty creator has communicated to every sort of creatures such perfections, as he himself was pleased to give: and the condition of each of their natures became the law of God, by which they ought every one, to limit and regulate their desires and enquiries. And tho' some can't arrive at that sort or degree of knowledge, which the faculties of their nature might be qualified to attain: yet we are not to murmur against God for this restraint; no more than it would be reasonable for us to be displeased, that God has not made us equal to the angels; or for the angels to be angry, because God hath reserved some attributes to himself, and has not made them possessed of all perfections.

Every one ought to be solicitous and zealous in the search after truth; in order to frame right notions of God, and to serve him acceptably. But this should never lead us into an enquiry after such things as puzzle and confound the understanding, and can never be acquired by human nature: because God has reserved the knowledge of these secrets to himself alone.

Man has a certain measure of knowledge allow'd him in this life, sufficient to answer the purposes and occasions thereof; but not to satisfy the presumptuous curiosity of some aspiring minds. He is capable of understanding the nature and properties of external things, so far as they conduce to our support and welfare in this world, and no farther. He can compare things together; estimate their relative natures, and conceive how they influence each other.

other. From hence he can raise observations, and deduce conclusions, invent and improve whatever is advantageous to the purposes of a social life. And from the knowledge of these visible things of the creation, man again deduces, and sees the invisible things, such as the eternal existence, and infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of GOD; and arrives at the knowledge of such other divine attributes, as are necessary to the purposes of religion.

It is therefore commendable for mortal men to enquire into the operations of nature, which are the work of GOD; and to reason from visible objects, in order to raise pious conceptions of the divine attributes; so far as they have faculties and opportunities to do it: but they must always remember to restrain their desire of knowledge within the bounds of those faculties, &c. and not with a proud and imperious heart, *intrude into those things, which they have not seen, vainly puffed up with a fleshly mind.*

As we are forbid to search after that, which it is impossible for us to attain; so we must not be solicitous after that, which is unlawful for us to desire. How shall vain man, who knoweth not the real and true nature of any thing, with which he daily converses, describe the invisible nature and essence of the divine being, which cannot be comprehended? *Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? Alas! he is higher than heaven, what canst thou know! deeper than hell, what canst thou do?* Job xi. 7, 8.

GOD has revealed to us every thing necessary to inspire us with true notions of his being and attributes, and has enabled our reason to form just ideas of them: so that we can't be too inquisitive after these *things revealed to us*: but what cannot be known clearly by reason and revelation, about the
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divine nature and attributes concerns us not: for *we can't by searching find out the nature of GOD.*

To search after things unlawful, would be acting over again the original disobedience of our first parents. Could we propose to ourselves never so much pleasure in the discovery of what is impossible for us to find out, our desire of such a knowledge which GOD has reserved to himself, would be at least, the occasion and cause of sin. For, tho' the *tree of knowledge* of good and evil appeared to our first parents to be *pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise*; yet forasmuch as GOD had expressly forbidden them *to taste of the fruit of that tree*, having reserved it to be a single instance of homage and acknowledgment to himself in quality of creator, and lord of paradise, it is evident, that the desire of that knowledge, which they expected to attain by eating that forbidden fruit, was at last, the occasion and cause of their sin.

It is also unlawful to search after any thing in such a manner, as in the pursuit thereof to neglect the study of the law of GOD. While our studies raise in us worthy notions of GOD, and cultivate in us charitable dispositions towards all men, they will *make us wise unto salvation*: because they will teach us to adore the wisdom of the almighty creator in all his works, and to believe the truths of religion, in such a manner, as thereby to be persuaded to conform our practice in earnest to the rules of the divine law.

This only is truly worthy of a rational being, and acceptable to GOD. This only is a study, which will testify that GOD is with us; and that we are guided by the HOLY GHOST: which will yield us both present and future satisfaction: which will afford us the truest contentment *now*, and the solidest and most substantial joy *at the last*.

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They that study the works of God and nature otherwise, and search after the truths of religion in another manner, would do well to consider in what manner human knowledge is distinguished by *Solomon*, who had given his curiosity the most unbounded liberty, and had beyond comparison the largest extent of knowledge ever bestowed upon mere man, *whose wisdom compassed the whole universe; and whose understanding was as great as the sand upon the sea shore*; yet this very man, when he came seriously to compare all things, which he had observed, and to consider the last issue of things, he cautions all men to remember, that there is a wisdom, which multiplieth bitterness; and that there is a knowledge, which bringeth nothing but weariness; and then concludes with this wise reflection: *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear GOD and keep his commandments, for this is the whole*, *Ecclef. xii. 13.* If we confine our religious inquiries to this rule, we shall do *the whole duty of man*,^o and arrive at our whole happiness: but if we desire more knowledge than our whole duty, we thereby shall be led to neglect part, and perhaps the most essential part of our duty, which will *multiply bitterness* at the last.

THE PRAYER.

O Lord God, who in thy infinite wisdom hast reserved to thyself the knowledge of many things from the inquiries of mortal man, and hast vouchsafed to grant him such a measure of knowledge, as may be sufficient to lead us to, and to confirm him in his duty, and to answer all the purposes and occasions of human life: give me a true sense of my own inability to find out the secret things, which thou hast not revealed, and of the folly, vanity and sin to pry into those things, which none but divine understanding can comprehend. Let me

rest satisfied with the perfections thou hast been pleased to communicate to me; and never presume to search after any thing that is either impossible for me to attain, or unlawful for me to desire; always believing what thy Son has revealed, and ready to embrace the dictates of thy holy spirit. And this I beg thro' JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

C H A P. V.

Of the ever blessed TRINITY, Three Persons and One GOD.

HAVING duly consider'd the argument of the preceeding chapter, where it is shewn, that the desire of human knowledge should be confined within the bounds of human capacities; we shall pass to that great mystery of our faith, where we are taught to believe *three persons and one GOD in the Trinity.*

Nothing can be more clearly revealed than this article of our belief: yet nothing is more impossible for human understanding, than to arrive at a just and perfect knowledge in what manner that blessed *three* exists in *one GOD.* The *Trinity* and *Unity* is one of *those things which are revealed*, and consequently *belong unto us and to our children to know:* but the manner how this existeth, is one of the *secret things, that belong unto the Lord our GOD.*

Therefore, when this or any other divine mystery is proposed for our assent, let us always observe what it is we are to believe, lest we mistake the object of our faith, and instead of assenting unto the proposition, which our reason acknowledges comes from GOD, we vainly enquire into the manner, how that object existeth; which manner not being revealed to us, is not to be comprehended by bare reason.

reason. For, tho' reason is that means, by which the father of light, and fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth, which he has placed within the reach of our natural faculties; yet that unassisted reason cannot search into *the secret things of GOD*. Reason only serves to vouch for the truth of those new set of discoveries made by divine revelation, in the testimony and proof it gives, that they are come from GOD. So the use of reason is to try the evidences brought for a divine revelation: and the use of divine revelation, or true faith, is not to set reason aside: but, after that, upon a due examination, it finds and pronounceth the revelation to be divine, to become a true and safe guide for the attainment of those mysteries, which before it was not able to discover.

Thus it is we are to be guided in the search of this great mystery of the *blessed Trinity*. It is proposed to us for our assent and belief: our reason examines the evidences or motives of credibility, or the authority, which conveys this general truth to us: and when it finds this mystery warranted by the same authority, as imposes on us the belief of a GOD; it then pronounceth the necessity of our believing, tho' we have not a comprehensive knowledge of every particular relating to it, and do not understand the manner how it may be. For, the very same rule, which teacheth us that there is a revealed religion or divine revelation, teacheth also, that whatever GOD reveals is most infallibly true, tho' it be never so seemingly contradictory to human capacities.

Therefore, as GOD has reserved some things, that can only be known by himself alone, let us not seem to rival the supreme being with our vain desires, lest we become like those apostate spirits, *who kept not their first estate, but having revolted from GOD are reserved in chains, under darkness, unto the judgment*

of the great day. Let us rather endeavour to attain that knowledge only, which may make us wise unto salvation; and always bear in mind these excellent words of the wise son of Sirach: *Many are in high places and of renown; but mysteries are revealed to the meek. Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee; nor search the things that are above thy strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereon with reverence: for it is not needful for thee to see with thine eyes the things which are in secret,* Eccles. iii. 21.

Being thus prepared for receiving the doctrine of the *blessed Trinity*, we will now enquire in what manner this incomprehensible mystery can be accounted the object of our knowledge.

To proceed with the utmost care not to trespass upon the hidden things of GOD, and to attain the utmost knowledge of this revealed truth, we will enquire *speculatively* into the scripture account of their *nature*, and into the *moral* and *practical* relation which the three persons in the godhead bear towards mankind.

In a speculative light we are to enquire into the *nature* of those divine persons. How far the *blessed Trinity* can be said to be the object of our knowledge in this view, is not easy to be ascertained. For, as this part of our faith is that, which we are least capable to understand; because we are least concerned therein; so the scriptures are very concise in this particular: it being of much more importance, that it should be clearly revealed to us, what those persons are *relatively to us*, than what their nature is *absolutely in themselves*. Yet even upon this head, it is revealed to mankind, That

GOD the Father is one supreme absolute independent cause and original of all things: whose name is I AM: eternal, infinite, omnipotent, and self-sufficient: neither created, nor begotten, nor proceeding from another: the maker and Lord of all things;

things; by whom all things material and immaterial, visible and invisible, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, mortal and immortal, in heaven and in earth, were made: by whose word the lands and the waters, the air, sun, moon and stars, the heaven or firmament, and the heaven of heavens, and all things that are therein, plants, beasts, men, angels and arch-angels, were created out of nothing, of whom the Son himself, the saviour of mankind, was before all ages begotten in an ineffable manner: and from whom the spirit of truth, the comforter and sanctifier of all holy men proceedeth, or is sent forth.

This is the supreme father or lord of all, who dwelleth in light inaccessible; whose majesty no thought can comprehend: whose glory no eye can behold: whose power no strength can resist: from whose presence no swiftness can flee: whose knowledge penetrates into the most secret and inward parts of the creation: whose justice no art can evade, and whose mercy and goodness extend over all his creatures.

This is the GOD, whom natural light dictated to the heathen world: whom *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* adored: who brought the children of *Israel* out of the land of *Egypt*; even the Father of our Lord *JESUS CHRIST*, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. See page 13. concerning the being and nature of GOD.

As to the nature of GOD *the Son*, it is revealed unto us, that the divine person, our Lord and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*, had a being in the bosom of his father, and was partaker of his father's glory before the foundation of the world, in such a manner, as to be also *one GOD with the father*: for, in the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with GOD, and the word was GOD, *John i. 1.* where by the word we are to understand the only begotten Son of GOD;

GOD; because he was, as it were, the mouth or oracle of GOD the Father; the angel of his presence; the great publisher or preacher of his will; and the mediator between GOD and his creatures. For, as all men must appeal to GOD thro' him in their prayers and thanksgivings, and as there is none other name under heaven given unto men, in whom and thro' whom we may receive health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST; so thro' him are derived and conveyed all communications of GOD the father to his creatures.

He is the only begotten of the father; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power. He was the first principle and head over all: *who shall declare his generation? All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Moreover, *all things were created for him, and by him they consist.* See *John i. 2 Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 2. Eph. iii. 9. and Rev. iii. 14. and page 113, &c.*

The scripture gives little or no encouragement to the inquisitiveness and curiosity of human speculation, concerning the nature of the HOLY GHOST. Nothing more is revealed than that he is a divine person, *proceeding* and being sent forth from the father and from the son; we have no account of the manner of that procession or derivation: and therefore we must be content with what the scripture expresseth, of his being in a singular manner, which we can't presume to understand, much less explain, *the spirit of GOD.* But of this more largely in the first chapter of this third book.

Having thus shewn what the scripture declares in a speculative manner, concerning the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; we proceed to consider these three divine persons in their moral relation to

us, or to enquire how the *offices* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost relate to mankind.

GOD *the Father* being absolute and supreme over all, made the world by the ministration of his son, and governs it by a perpetual providence. He compassionating the miserable state of mankind, into which they fell by the sin of our first parents, and resolving to save them by his free grace, sent his son to take our nature upon him, and therein to reveal his gracious will, and delivered him up to an ignominious death, that he might expiate our transgressions, and satisfy divine justice by his own blood: for which end he raised JESUS from the dead; exalted him to his own right hand; appointed him to be judge of the quick and the dead; has made all things subject unto him, and by him reconciles all things unto himself in heaven and earth: and has appointed a kingdom of eternal happiness to as many as believe in him, serve and obey him, and will destroy the wicked with an everlasting destruction.

GOD *the Son*, by the appointment of the father, according to the promise made to *Adam* and his posterity, is our saviour, mediator, advocate, and will be our judge at the last day. He emptied himself of his divine glory, and voluntarily took upon him the form of a servant, was made flesh, and dwelt in this world; and to make our faith and repentance acceptable to his father, laid down his life for us, became a propitiation for our sins, interceeds for us before the throne of grace, and will come to judge the whole earth, every one according to their works.

GOD *the Holy Ghost*, in his moral relation to mankind, has been particularly and fully described in the first chapter of this book: and therefore we shall now enquire what is *practical*, concerning the honour or worship due to each of these three divine persons.

To the person of the father is to be directed that absolute and supreme worship, by which he is acknowledged to be *alone* the maker and judge of all : by whose incomprehensible power the world was created : by whose unerring providence the universe is governed : who sent forth his son to redeem us, and his holy spirit to sanctify us : and to whom at the consummation of all things, our Lord shall deliver up the kingdom. It is therefore to the person of the father we are to pray for pardon, forgiveness and remission of our sins : that our faith and repentance may be accepted through the powerful intercession of CHRIST our great high-priest, and that our hearts may be renewed by the inspiration of his holy spirit : and to him we are to give continual thanks for his original and undeserved goodness in sending his son, at first, to be the saviour of the world, and to be unto us a propitiation thro' faith in his blood ; and for the continuation of that blessing, in affording us the perpetual assistance of the HOLY GHOST.

We must worship the Son, by offering up all our prayers in his name ; whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, we shall receive it. We must rely on his merits, and depend upon his intercession. We must obey him, as our lord ; love him, as our saviour ; apply to him, as our mediator and advocate ; and fear him, as our judge. For, GOD hath given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is Lord to the glory of GOD the Father. So that as before all men honoured the Father, it is now the peculiar addition of the *christian* religion, that we must honour the Father through the Son, to the glory of GOD the Father.

We must honour the person of the divine spirit, by acknowledging him to be the inspirer of the prophets ;

phets; the immediate worker of miracles, which are called the witnesses and testimony, the power and demonstration of the spirit; the sanctifier of all hearts, and the immediate distributor of all gifts, which GOD distributes for the edification of the church of CHRIST.

We must receive and believe his testimony, as delivered in the inspired writings; obey his godly motions; be solicitous to obtain his gifts and graces, and infinitely careful not to grieve, nor quench, nor drive him from us.

THE PRAYER.

GOD grant that I, and every one, may so give honour to the Father of all things, thro' the mediation and intercession of his Son our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, and by the assistance and operation of the HOLY GHOST; that by the communion and fellowship of the same spirit, and thro' the merits and death of the Son of GOD made man, we may be presented blameless before the throne of the Father of inaccessible majesty in the great day; through JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

BOOK THE FOURTH.

O F

The CHRISTIAN RELIGION; its ORDINANCES and PRACTICE.

CHAP. I.

Of the CHURCH of CHRIST, its Autho- rity: and of choosing our RELIGION.

THE church of CHRIST is defined to be
the *church of the living GOD, the pillar
and ground of truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. com-
posed of, or including all visible believers,
wherever dispersed or distressed over the
whole world; and maintaining the truth of the
gospel, with power and demonstration of the spirit,
against the very gates of hell. Where a true gos-
pel faith is the foundation and support, there will
be also the church of the living GOD united under
JESUS CHRIST its head.

The church of *England* in its sixth article of re-
ligion, is of the same opinion, where we are taught,
that “ the visible church of CHRIST is a congre-
gation of faithful men, in which the pure word
of GOD is preached, and the sacraments duly ad-
ministrated.”

“ministred according to CHRIST’s ordinance, in
 “all those things that of necessity are requisite to
 “the same.”

In this definition we are taught the *visibilty*, the *unity* and *universality*, and the *marks* or *tokens* of the visible church.

That there is a church of CHRIST not only invisible, but also visible, is manifest from many passages of holy writ. The invisible is composed of all the elect, who are or shall be either in heaven triumphing, or on earth fighting against the flesh, the world and the devil. Which members of the church are said to be invisible, not because their persons are hid from the sight of men; but because their faith and conscience towards GOD, is not perfectly known to us.

The members of the visible church are some of them for GOD, and some against GOD: every one being deemed a part of the church, and accounted faithful in the sight of man, so long as he makes no manifest and open violation of, and opposition to the gospel of JESUS CHRIST.

The invisible and triumphing church is clearly described in *Revelations*, under the character of those who *overcome and keep the works of CHRIST unto the end, cloathed in white raiment; whose names are written in the book of life*; and who are made *pillars* in the temple of GOD, ch. ii. ver. 26, 28. ch. iii. ver. 5, 12. and ch. vii. ver. 14, 15. where we read that, *these are they which came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of GOD, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them.*

As for the visible militant church, it is as clearly set forth by the divine penmen. In *Galatians* i. 29. we have an account that they who are *born after*

after the flesh persecute them that are born after the spirit. In *Ephesians* vi. 10, &c. the apostle by his exhortation to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; and to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, informs us how to conduct ourselves in the church militant against our spiritual enemies, and to wrestle against principalities and powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. For all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS shall suffer persecution, 2 Tim. iii. 12. compared with 1 Pet. v. 9, 10. Rev. xii. 7, 11, 17. xvii. 14.

The visible church is to be searched for in those scriptures, where our Saviour has given us the parable of the sower, the marriage, and the virgins: where also he complained, *Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil?* John vi. 70. compared with John xiii. 11. And the apostle writing to Timothy upon this subject, useth this significant parable, *In a great house are not only vessels of gold and silver; but also of wood, and of earth, and some for honour, and some unto dishonour,* 2 Tim. ii. 20.

This church of CHRIST nevertheless is but one. For the visible church, wherever dispersed or distressed, is not many congregations; but consists of one society of the faithful. As it is written in 1 Cor. x. 9. and Rom. xii. 5. *We that are many are one body in CHRIST, and every one members one of another,* compared with 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 14. Rom. xiii. 4, 5. *There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in CHRIST JESUS,* Gal. iii. 28.

This church is universal. Tho' the visible church, properly understood, is but a part of the universal, it is rightly termed universal, forasmuch as it is a congregation of all the faithful, which has JESUS CHRIST for its only head; who commanded his

disciples to *preach the gospel to every creature, and to teach all nations.* In consequence of this, we are informed by the divine penmen, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved, *Acts ii. 21. That the gospel is the power of GOD to salvation to every one that believeth,* Rom. i. 16. That *he, who believes and is baptized shall be saved,* Mark xvi. 16. That in every nation, *he that serveth GOD and worketh righteousness is accepted with him,* Acts x. 35. and that by CHRIST JESUS, every one that believeth, is justified, Acts xiii. 39. By which authorities we find every calling, sex, age and nation, included in the visible church of CHRIST. And as this church has been from the beginning of the world, as may be seen in *Revelations xiii. 8.* so it will continue to the end of time, according to the promise, *Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,* Matth. xxviii. 20.

The *marks or tokens*, by which this visible church is to be known and distinguished, are the due and true administration of the word of GOD, and of the sacraments instituted by CHRIST himself.

Thus we learn the meaning of those scriptures, where our Saviour calleth them *his mother and his brethren, which hear the word of GOD and do it,* Luke viii. 21. where again he saith, *He that is of GOD, heareth GOD's word,* John viii. 47. *My sheep hear my voice,* John x. 27. Therefore the apostle to the Romans asketh this plain question, *How shall they hear without a preacher?* And another writes, *He, that knoweth GOD, heareth us* (preachers of the gospel) *He, that is not of GOD, heareth us not,* John iv. 6.

The next mark is a right administration of the sacraments of *baptism* and the *Lord's-supper*, instituted by CHRIST himself.

For *baptism* we have this proof: *Go ye, therefore and teach all nations, BAPTIZING them in the name of*
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the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. By one spirit we are all baptized into one body, 1 Cor. xii. 13. and they that are baptized into CHRIST JESUS, are washed from their sins, and sanctified: See Rom. vi. 3. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

For the *Lord's-supper*: its institution is proved expressly from the evangelical record, where it is written, *The Lord JESUS, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat, this is my body, which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me.—After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This is the new Testament in my blood; this do, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me.* Compare 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25. with Luke xxii. 19.

This is the church of whose authority or privileges, the twentieth article of the established religion in England expresseth itself in these words. *The church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of Faith. Provided she doth not ordain any thing, that is contrary to GOD's written word, nor doth expound one place of scripture so as to be repugnant to another. Wherefore, altho' the church be a witness, and a keeper of holy writ: yet as it ought not to decree any thing against the same; so besides the same, ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of salvation.*

In which article we are taught, that it is the privilege of the church to decree rites and ceremonies: a privilege founded upon the example of the apostles, who ordained, that all things in divine worship should be done decently, and in order; and particularly, that men should not be covered: that women should be covered and keep silence; and that the public worship should be performed in a known tongue, understood by those, who attend the divine service. See

1 Cor. xi. 4, 7, 14, &c. xii. 2, 3, 4. But this privilege is more especially founded upon the *commandment* of GOD himself, who being the author not of confusion, but of peace, will at all times have every thing in the church to be done unto *edifying, decently and in order*, 1 Cor. xiv. 26, 40.

Yet we are further taught, that *this privilege* doth not extend to a licentious and arbitrary power, for a church to ordain what rites and ceremonies she pleaseth. For, it is provided that she shall not decree any rite or ceremony, which, in its own nature shall be *impious*, like those ordinances, manners and idols, against which the prophet warns us in these words, *Walk not in the ordinances of your fathers; neither observe their manners; nor defile yourselves with their idols*, ch. xx. 18. who were teachers of *vanity and of lies*, Jer. x. 8. Heb. iii. 18.

Neither may she decree any thing, which, in its use, shall be *superstitious*, like the *brazen serpent*, which king *Hezekiah* brake in pieces: or which shall for their weight be *over heavy*, or *grievous* to be born; like the *pharisaical* impositions; of which we have these testimonies in scripture: *Ye*, says JESUS, *lode men with burdens grievous to be born*, Luke xi. 46. *Why tempt ye God*, says the apostolic council at *Jerusalem*, *to the judaizing christians, to lay a yoke on the disciples necks, which neither our fathers nor we, were able to bear?* Acts xv. 10. And again writes the apostle to the *Colossians*, complaining of their superstitious ceremonies, *Why are ye burthened with traditions?* Col. ii. 20.

Neither is the church to decree or ordain any thing tho' ever so worthy in the sight of men, as thereby to make void, or bring the ordinance of GOD into disuse, or little reputation. Of which practice our Saviour spake to the *Pharisees* with great disdain, when he said, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* For, laying aside
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the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of cups and pots; and many other such like things ye do. Full well ye reject the commandment of GOD, that ye may keep your own tradition, &c. making the word of GOD of none effect thro' your tradition, which ye have delivered, Mark vii. 7—13. — Nor against christian liberty: nor in any wise contrary to the written word of GOD. For we are commanded to stand fast in the liberty, wherewith CHRIST hath made us free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, Gal. v. 1. and he, who planted the church declares expressly, that every plant, which his father hath not planted, shall be rooted up, Matt. xv. 13.

Therefore, when we assert that the church visible has power to ordain rites, ceremonies, and constitutions, it must be understood that her decrees, in those cases, must tend altogether to promote christian love, peace and charity: to edify the servants of the Lord in his holy service and worship; and to keep them in the fear of GOD.

The church hath also authority to judge and determine in controversies of faith. This privilege, tho' strictly exercised in the collective body, is diffusive also in every member of the church, who is of sound judgment; by which they, in their respective stations, are enabled to embrace the truth, to avoid errors, and to reprove gainsayers; according to the following divine authorities, *Reject profane and old wives fables*, 1 Tim. iv. 7. *Beware of false prophets*, Matt. vii. 15. *Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines*, Heb. xiii. 9. *Beware lest ye, being led away with the error of the wicked fall from your own steadfastness*, 2 Pet. iii. 17. — *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him GOD-speed*, 2. John ver. 10. *For there shall arise false CHRIST's and false prophets*, Matt. xxiv. 23, 24. — *I spake as to wise men*,

or men of understanding, *judge ye what I say*, 1 Cor. x. 15.—*Prove all things, hold fast that which is good*, 1 Thess. v. 21.

But, if disputes and controversies arise amongst the faithful, which can't be decided to the satisfaction of each party, they should come before the church, and abide by the determination of those, who are more particularly ordained to interpret or expound the word of GOD. For, the apostle writes that *the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal*, &c. See 1 Cor. xii. 7—10. Yet, it was only to his disciples, whom he ordained to preach the gospel, that our Saviour said, *It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given*, Matt xiii. 11.

Where let it be remarked, in order to avoid contention amongst *christians*, that the analogy of faith must always be considered in expounding the scripture: and as no prophesy is of any *private interpretation*, 2 Pet. i. 20, and whatsoever interpretation is given, if it agree not to that analogy of faith, commanded to be observed in *Rom. xi. 6*, is a private interpretation; great care is to be taken, that one place of scripture be so interpreted and expounded, as it shall agree with another; and to all the proportion of faith.

Hence it appeareth, that notwithstanding the church hath authority to hear and to determine in controversies of faith; yet that power doth not extend to judge the word of GOD, nor to judge otherwise than GOD's word doth judge. For thus it is written, *I beseech you, brethren, mark them diligently, which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine, which you have learned, and avoid them*, *Rom. xvi. 17*. *Hear the Son of God*, Matt. xvii. 5. For, *to him give all the prophets witness*, Acts x. 43. *Search the scriptures*, John v. 39. For, *whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of CHRIST, hath not GOD*,

2 John ii. 9. We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Eph. ii. 20. The whole scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of GOD may be perfect, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Therefore if any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and to the doctrine, which is according to godliness, he is proud; knowing nothing; but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmises, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. Nothing but the word of GOD hath any title to that truth, which cannot fail, to which we must submit, and through which we are sanctified. See John xvii. 16, 17. To the Jews our Saviour said, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them, Luke xvi. 29. We christians have also a sure word of prophecy, 2 Pet. i. 19.

Yet so far we are to hearken unto the church, as to a faithful witness, testifying to the world what hath been the doctrine of GOD's people in all ages; and as a trusty recorder, keeping and making known what that word of GOD is, which it hath received. See Luke iv. 17. Acts xiii. 27. xv. 21. 2 Cor. iii. 15. viii. 18.

Neither may the church enforce any thing to be believed, as necessary to salvation, that is either contrary to, or besides the word of GOD. Of which we have the strongest proofs in Deut. iv. 2. where GOD said to his church under the Mosaic covenant, Ye shall not add unto the word, which I command you; neither shall you diminish ought from it. See Gal. iii. 15. And the declaration in Revelation xxii. 18, 19. ought to confirm the same command to GOD's people under the new covenant by JESUS CHRIST, where we read, that if any man shall add unto these things, GOD shall add unto him the plagues, that are written

written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, GOD shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

From hence we are taught to enquire into the grounds of that religion, which is offered for our profession; and to be always ready to give an answer to every one that asks a reason of the hope, that is in us. Every one that has a soul to be saved, is concerned to be *fully persuaded in his own mind*, Rom. xv. 5; not taking all upon trust, but judging, as well as he can for himself; because at the last day he must answer for himself; and so growing established in the truth, and holding fast, that which is good; that seducers may not fraudulently wrest it out of his hands. It is not expected that every one shall have a capacity to dispute with, and to confute subtle disputants and gainfayers; but they must be thoroughly persuaded that the truth they embrace, is available to their salvation; so that they shall not be carried away with every wind of doctrine; but shall have in them that, which may preserve them from error and superstition.

Wherefore our Lord and our church put all upon searching the scriptures; and trying the doctrines of our teachers by that infallible rule: in which all the great things necessary to salvation, which every one ought to know and believe, are clearly and distinctly revealed to every humble and sincere enquirer into God's holy word, the standard of all saving knowledge and truth, from which there lies no appeal. So that it is not what this doctor, or this church teacheth and ordains; but what the lord of heaven and earth has said, to which a christian ought to conform and submit.

Many have been the stratagems of the devil against pious and devout souls, to draw them from the way
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of truth, and to deceive them in the great affair of salvation. Much learning has been employed to cover the fraud, to beguile the unwary and unstable, and the false zeal of many has carried them by sea and land to make profelytes to a superstition, which has made them threefold more children of the devil. They that desert and reject the holy scriptures can find no sure footing any where else. It is he, who stands fast on this holy ground, that is safe from the wiles of the devil, and the deceptions of wicked and designing men. For, *whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of CHRIST, has not GOD: but he that abideth in the doctrine of CHRIST, hath both the Father and the Son*, ii. John 9. and *they that have rightly learned CHRIST, have been taught by him, as the truth is in JESUS*, Eph. iv. 21.

Consequently they, who have the gospel in their hands, and are of an understanding mind, can't be at a loss in their search for the way to heaven, tho' they be illiterate, and compassed about with a variety of religions, where every profession seems confident of being in the right. The word of GOD is given us to profit withall: it is the fountain of truth: the light of our eyes, and guide of our feet: the *sure testimony of the Lord, making wise the simple*, Ps. cxix. 130. For, tho' it do not make every one scholars; nor free every one from all manner of errors; it will secure the simple from erring to their ruin; and it will make them wise to the saving of their souls. No doubt, there are many things in the scriptures hard to be understood: but the ignorance of those things can be no obstacle to salvation. For, *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him* (let them be learned or unlearned) *and he will shew them his covenant*, Ps. xxv. 14. and *if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD*, John. vii. 17. If it humbles the pride of man, and glorifies the grace of GOD,

in our salvation by JESUS CHRIST: if it tends to suppress sin and wickedness, and to enforce an holy and good life: if it draws the heart and mind away from earthly and temporal things, and fixes them upon what is heavenly and eternal: if it carries us out of forms, and human rites and ceremonies, to worship God in spirit and in truth, and by its efficacy settles the conscience in the peace of God, through the confidence of his love to us, in his beloved son; these are sufficient evidences, for any man of common understanding, to know that he is in the way of salvation. By these means the believer has *the witness in himself*, 1 John v. 10. not hanging all upon the learning and authority of others; not only supposing, but feeling the truth, by the powerful influence thereof upon himself, to transform him into a suitableness to what he believes and professes: which confirms him more in the true faith, than the highest human authority.

THE PRAYER.

O Lord, I beseech thee, to keep thy church and household continually in thy true religion, that they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace, may evermore be defended by thy mighty power: and I bless thy holy name, that in the choice of my religion, I am not left only to the dictates of my own uncertain reason, but have the blessed advantage of thy infallible revelation. I believe not only upon the authority of the church; but upon that witness, which I have, thro' thy grace in myself. I have found him of whom *Moses* in the law, and the prophets did write: and I know that this is indeed the CHRIST, the saviour of the world. Whither then should I go, but to him, who hath the words of eternal life? whither but to him, who

who hath so plainly taught the word of GOD in truth, that by what is written, I may believe on the name of the son of GOD, and believing, may have life thro' his name; and by doing his will, may know the doctrine to be of GOD? O! may I never let him go: but hold him fast, and the profession of my faith without wavering; and ever be as true to the gospel, as the gospel is true in itself. Grant me thy grace, O heavenly Father, to help me, and to keep me in the truth: and make me faithful unto death; thro' JESUS CHRIST, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

CHAP II.

Of the Gospel MINISTRY, and the PEOPLE's Duty under the same.

IN the *visible church* of CHRIST, we are to acknowledge a ministry, whose office and work is of CHRIST's own institution, of which the xxiiiid article of religion gives this description. "It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministring the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same: and those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men, who have public authority given unto them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard."

Where we are referred to those scriptures, which record the mission of *Samuel* and *Jeremiah*, under the old covenant; of *John Baptist* the forerunner of our Saviour; and of CHRIST himself, and his apostles and disciples under the new covenant: to
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Jer. xiv. 14. where the wicked and false prophets are rebuked for preaching without a commission from GOD: to *Matt.* ix. 38. where there is a command to pray the lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest: and more particularly to those passages, where we read that GOD hath ordained in his church apostles, prophets, teachers and workers of miracles, *1 Cor.* xii. 28. and that CHRIST being ascended into heaven, gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, *Eph.* iv. 11.

These ministers, thus ordained, are obliged to exercise their office of *preaching* the word of GOD. For, the apostle, writing to the *Corinthians* upon this very subject, says, *necessity is laid upon me, and wo is me if I preach not the gospel*, *1 Cor.* ix. 16, 17. No persecutions, nor servile fear of men could make the apostles neglect this duty; which CHRIST himself enforced so effectually in these words, *Surely I must also preach the kingdom of GOD, for therefore am I sent*, *Luke* iv. 43. compared with *Acts* iv. 17, &c. and *1.* 42.

To them also belong the administration of the *sacraments*. For CHRIST our Saviour not only commanded his disciples to preach, but also to baptize, and to administer the *Lord's supper*. See *Matt.* xxviii. 19. *Luke* xxii. 19. *1 Cor.* xi. 24, 25. which ministry was ordained to continue to the end of the world, *Matth.* xxviii. 20. *For the gathering together of the saints, for the works of the ministry, and for the edification of the body of CHRIST, till we all meet together (in the unity of faith, and knowledge of the Son of GOD) unto a perfect man*, *Eph.* iv. 11, 12, 13.

The apostle to the *Galatians* gives us a good idea of a gospel ministry, or whom we are to esteem lawful ministers in the Lord's vineyard, *Gal.* i. 7, &c. and in *1 Tim.* iv. 14. where, in the first instance,

stance, we have an account of that apostle's extraordinary ministry, and his caution against intruders into the office of a pastor and teacher; and, in the latter instance, the ordinary method of ordaining and supplying the church with lawful pastors and teachers; which is continued down to these days, and is allow'd by the word of GOD.

But, tho' a power be invested in the church, to appoint and to ordain ministers for GOD's people, and to perform his service in the administration of the ordinances of CHRIST; that power is restrained. They, who are *candidates* for the ministry, must be qualified according to the terms of the gospel administration: and they, who are authorized to ordain them, must be well certified of their good and approved qualifications; that they are men, not boys, nor women, *1 Tim. ii. 12.* of good behaviour, not incontinent, nor given to wine, nor strikers, nor covetous, *1 Tim. iii. 2.* nor proud, *1 Pet. v. 3.* nor self-willed, nor soon angry: but lovers of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, and able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince gainsayers, *Tit. i. 7, 8, 9.* rightly dividing the word of GOD, *2 Tim. ii. 15.* bold to rebuke, *1 Tim. v. 20.* diligent in the work of the Lord, *Matth. ix. 38.* and *2 Tim. iv. 2.* taking care of the flock, *Acts xx. 28.* and ready to suffer for the name of CHRIST, *Acts v. 41. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.* and *2 Cor. xi. 23.*

Thus we discover by the institution and office of the ministers of the gospel, that they are ordained to provide nourishment for our souls; which entitles them to many relative duties from the people.

They, that are appointed by GOD to convey to us the means of grace, ought to be loved and esteemed for their work's sake, as the apostle expressly tells the *Thessalonians*, *1 Eph. v. 13.* they ought to be respected and revered, as men invested with
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the great character of ambassadors from heaven, to convey to us the greatest blessings we are capable of receiving; because they relate to our peace in this life, and eternal salvation in a future state. They have a just right not only to a due respect and reverence in our words and actions; to be treated with civility in conversation, but to be obeyed in all matters, which they command from the pure word of GOD; or consonant thereunto. How then will they answer it before the tribunal of the almighty, by whom these pastors and teachers are sent, who make them the objects of their mirth; proclaim their failings, in order to revile their persons behind their backs: who use scurrilous speeches, injurious language, and contemptuous behaviour towards them. For, as our Saviour told his disciples, when he sent them to preach the gospel, that whoever despised them, despised him: and whoever despised him, despised GOD that sent him: so whatever jest or reproach, or scandal, or contempt shall be used or cast upon the ministers of the gospel, as such irreverence tends to debase the ministry, and to obstruct the conveyance of the means of grace, the disrespect cast upon them, will be accounted an affront to the master, whom they represent: and this duty of the people towards their pastors and teachers, is not required for any *inherent holiness* supposed to be found in them: but for that *relative holiness*, which consists in some peculiar relation to GOD's service. As may be exemplified by the tribe of *Levi*; which was called *holy*, tho' they often went out of the way, and caused many to stumble at the law; their holiness consisting in their particular relation to GOD in the performance of that office, to which he had appointed them; and not in their singular or inherent purity and piety, and turning many from their iniquity: which gave oc-

caſion for that article of religion concerning the unworthineſs of miniſters, Art. xxvi.

“ Altho’ in the viſible church the evil be ever
 “ mingled with the good, and ſometime the evil
 “ have chief authority in the miniſtration of the
 “ word and ſacraments; yet forasmuch as they do
 “ not the ſame in their own name, but in CHRIST’s,
 “ and do miniſter by his commiſſion and autho-
 “ rity, we may uſe their miniſtry, both in hearing
 “ the word of GOD, and in the receiving the ſa-
 “ craments. Neither is the effect of CHRIST’s or-
 “ dinance taken away by their wickedneſs; nor the
 “ grace of GOD’s gifts diminiſhed from ſuch, as by
 “ faith, and rightly, do receive the ſacraments ad-
 “ miniſtered unto them: which are effectual, be-
 “ cauſe of CHRIST’s inſtitution and promiſe, tho’
 “ they be miniſtered by evil men.”

However, their office does not exempt them from blame and puniſhment. If miniſters ſhould be ſo forgetful of their duty to GOD and man, ſo to live as to diſgrace their calling, and to diſhonour their maſter and his holy religion, they are to be accuſed of them only, who have certain knowledge of their offences: their accuſation ought to be laid before the church, or that part of it to which they belong: and being found guilty, the church hath power to depoſe, or deprive them of their eccleſiaſtical function, *Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5.* Whoever publiſheth the faults of a paſtor in any other manner, is greatly to be ſuſpected, not to be ſo highly offended at the ſcandalous life of the miniſter, as to be endeavouring thereby to bring all religion into contempt. For, it is a true obſervation, that they who ſpread ſcandal againſt the prieſthood, and treat it with contempt, are ſceptical in their principles, and diſſolute in their practice.

In a review of this inſtitution of the goſpel miniſtry, we find that it includes a duty from the
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laity not only towards the persons of their *pastors* and *teachers*; but in regard to themselves. The preaching, and our hearing the word of God will little avail us, if we do not prepare our hearts with *humility* and *prayer*, as well as with *faith*. Our thoughts, and the conceit of our own learning and abilities must be lowered, and we must be persuaded, in our own minds, that we stand in need of instruction, or to be put in mind of those truths, which are to guide us in the way of righteousness and true holiness. We must look upon the ministry of the word to be a *divine institution*, to correct, to edify, and to teach us that wisdom, which is from above, and without which we cannot arrive at the knowledge of things, which are necessary to our salvation. And we must resolve to carry with us that disposition and temper of mind, as shall be susceptible of reproof and doctrine, and acceptable to the eye of the Almighty, who is always present to observe our frame of spirit under this ordinance. We must entertain an awful sense of the divine perfections, praying earnestly for those graces, which are necessary to receive the word with reverence and edification: and that God would assist his ministers in preaching the glad tidings of his kingdom; so that what shall be delivered by them, may be agreeable to his will; and that this may be performed in such a manner, as to sink into the hearts and consciences of the hearers, enlighten their understandings, and enable them to receive the same with faith and love, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.

When we sit under a preacher, it is also our duty to beware of false prophets, and unsound doctrine. Therefore we are directed to *try the spirits*, and the *doctrines* delivered, whether they be founded on scripture, or fairly deducible from thence: that we may not be imposed upon by human speculations, arbitrary interpretations, and the errors of

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men, instead of embracing the truths, and submitting to the commandments of GOD.

We are to *mix the word with faith*, Heb. iv. 2. or endeavour to exercise those graces, that are suitable to the work we are engaged in ; to express the highest love and esteem for the glorious truths contained therein ; to be ready to obey with chearfulness every thing GOD commands, and to be heartily thankful for all his promises.

Moreover we must hear the word with a *particular application* of it to our own private condition, and consider seriously how far we are concerned to improve the same to our spiritual and eternal benefit.

This brings us to those *duties* to be performed *after* we have heard the word preached. When retired home, we must meditate on, digest and apply what we have heard, and bring forth the fruit of it in our lives and conversation ; *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*, Tit. ii. 13. And in regard to others : we ought to express a becoming zeal for the glory of GOD, and his divine truths, discouraging and rebuking vice, defending the faith, and endeavouring to draw many unto righteousness, and to establish them in the knowledge and love of GOD, and of his SON CHRIST JESUS, our Lord, 2 Pet. iii. 18.

By hearing, and also by reading the word of GOD, the mind is enlightened and furnished with the knowledge of divine truths : for, as *faith* is inseparably connected with salvation ; the knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel is necessary to faith ; and this *comes by hearing*, Rom. x. 17. Acts viii. 30, 31. Yet, we must not be satisfied with a bare assent to what is revealed : we ought to consider the tendency thereof to our sanctification and consolation ; admire the beauty, excellency and glory,

contained in the gospel covenant; the importance of its doctrines, and how they are to be improved by us to our spiritual advantage. For, it is not, till we find our hearts filled with love to JESUS CHRIST, and we grow in grace, as well as in the knowledge of our Saviour, 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. communicated to us by the ministry of the word, that the word of GOD may be said to be made effectual to our salvation; as our minds are very much enlightened and improved in the knowledge of those things, that lead us thercunto.

This same divine word is made effectual to bring us under conviction, discovering to us our sinful and miserable condition in the flesh; and informing us concerning those depths of wickedness, that are in our hearts by nature, which could not be otherwise sufficiently discerned by us, much less improved to our spiritual advantage. See *Jer.* xvii. 9. *Rom.* vii. 9. If we desire to examine our lives concerning our manifold transgressions and sins, and to search into their deformity and aggravations, in order to repent, and to forsake them: or, if we desire to be informed of the misery due to our offences, as that by sin we not only draw upon ourselves the wrath and curse of GOD; but without an interest in pardoning grace, are bound to acknowledge ourselves liable to it; we must consult the word of GOD, and there we shall find help and information.

The same word is made effectual to salvation, when what is contained therein tends to humble, and to lay us low at the foot of GOD: when we acknowledge that all his judgments are just and good, and even less than our iniquities deserve; *Ezra* ix. 13. and when we receive proofs for sins committed, with a particular application thereof to ourselves, and are made sensible of the guilt we have thereby contracted.

For,

For, by this word we are instructed concerning the infinite distance there is between the creator and the creature: the best of us being *as nothing, less than nothing, and vanity*, in comparison of him. *Isa. xl. 17.* It discovers to us the natural inclination of our hearts to depart from our duty, and to rebel against our maker; and the necessity of God's renewing and preventing grace, to keep us from running into all excess of vice with the worst of men.—It leads us into the knowledge of the various kinds of sin, to which we are exposed, and with which we, in the course of our lives, have ground to charge ourselves: into the knowledge of those duties we frequently neglect, or omit; and of those sins we commit, by causing others to fall or stumble in the pursuit of heaven.—It discovers to us the various aggravations of sins committed, as they are against light, love, mercies, and manifold resolutions and engagements, which we are laid under; and the great contempt, which sinners cast on the blessed Jesus, by disregarding, or not improving the benefits of his mediation, death and passion.—It convinceth us of the absolute necessity of a saviour; shewing us the utter impossibility of saving ourselves, by doing any thing capable of bringing us into a justified state, and so to render us acceptable in the sight of God; and drawing or leading us to CHRIST thro' faith.—It is the means whereby the spirit conforms the soul to the image of God, and subdues it to his will; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of CHRIST, *2 Cor. x. 4, 5.*—Hereby we are strengthened against temptation and corruption, and *kept from the ways of the destroyer*, *Pf. xvii. 4.* And thereby the spirit builds the soul up in grace, and establisheth it in holiness and comfort, thro' faith unto salvation. For, as the work of grace is not immediately brought to perfection, but is, in a progressive way, making ad-

vances to it; being first made holy by the renovation of our hearts and lives, and made partakers of those spiritual consolations, that accompany, or flow from the work of sanctification; and then built up in holiness and comfort, whereby we go from strength to strength, and are more and more established in the ways of God; so this is done by the preaching of the word, whereby we are said to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet. iii. 18. to go on safely and comfortably in our way to heaven, till the work of grace shall be perfected in glory.

THE PRAYER.

O Lord JESUS CHRIST, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger, *John Baptist*, to prepare thy way before thee, by preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins; grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries, may so likewise prepare and make ready thy way, by preaching the acceptable year of the Lord, and turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world, we may be accepted and enter into the joy of our Lord. And for the sake of thy church, so guide and govern the minds of thy servants, the pastors and teachers of thy flock, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve thee in the sacred ministry of thy church. Give thy heavenly grace, I most humbly beseech thee, to all those who are ordained to any holy function: and so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of God the father, and set forward the salvation of all men, as revealed in thy holy gospel.

And

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And as thou hast promised to pray for thy church, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, interceed with our heavenly father, who hath caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning, and to be preached for our edification, that I may so hear, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them; that by patience and comfort of his holy word, I may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of eternal life, which he has given us in thee his beloved Son, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

I. *Of the SACRAMENTS ordained by CHRIST.* II. *Of BAPTISM.* And, III. *Of the LORD'S-SUPPER.*

“THE sacraments ordained by CHRIST in
“his church, are only two, BAPTISM and
“the LORD'S-SUPPER, and they are not only
“badges or tokens of a christian's profession; but
“rather they are certain sure witnesses, and ef-
“fectual signs of grace, and of GOD's good will
“towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in
“us, and not only doth quicken, but also streng-
“then and confirm our faith in him.—And in
“such only, as worthily receive the same, they
“have a wholesome effect or operation: but they
“that receive them unworthily, purchase to them-
“selves damnation. *Art. of Religion, xxv.*

By these sacraments the *faithful* are particularly and visibly distinguished from *Jews, Turks,* and *Infidels*: and *christianity* receives the seal of the gospel covenant.

As *circumcision*, under the law by *Moses*, was the seal of that covenant, and a token how the corrupt

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and carnal affections of the mind should be subdued; and as the Lord required not so much the circumcision of the flesh, as the circumcision of the spirit or heart, *Deut. x. 16. xxxix. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Acts vii. 51. Rom. ii. 28. Philip. iii. 3. Coloss. ii. 11.* So under the gospel covenant of grace and truth, which came by JESUS CHRIST, baptism was instituted, in place of circumcision, to signify, that we being once dead unto sin, we are to live unto righteousness: for, being born in sin and children of wrath, we are hereby made children of grace, (See *Rom. vi. 3, &c.*) and must walk in newness of life, *Gal. iii. 27.*

Again: as the *paschal lamb* was instituted and ordained for a token or memorial to the *Jews*, that they flee from sin, as well as praise the Lord for their deliverance from the *Egyptian* bondage; and that they should prove the sincerity of their hearts, by celebrating the *passover*, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, *1 Cor. v. 8.* So the institution and participation of one loaf or the bread, and of one cup, or the wine in the LORD'S SUPPER, strengthens and increaseth our faith, and all other graces; obliges us to obedience in CHRIST; recommends peace and brotherly love, and a constant perseverance in the true worship of GOD, abstract from all appearance of idolatry, *1 Cor. x. 7, 16.*

But, tho' these sacraments become *effectual means* of salvation, we are not to be led away with a vain and sinful notion, that their efficacy is inherent, or from any power in themselves, or from any virtue derived from the piety and intention of him, by whom they are administered; but that they are made effectual only by the working of the HOLY GHOST, and the blessing of CHRIST. *Assemb. Cat. Qu. CLXI.*

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That an observance of those two gospel sacraments is insisted on in scripture, and is our bounden duty, we may gather from the several passages, which hereafter shall be produced under the articles of BAPTISM and the LORD'S SUPPER. In the mean time, let us consider the words of the *church catechism*, where it is taught that these sacraments are said to be *generally necessary to salvation*; not absolutely so, that salvation cannot be attained without them: but they are so *generally necessary* to salvation, as to be accounted the stated ordinary means, the channels by which GOD has promised to convey his grace and spirit to all true believers: therefore it is the duty of every *christian* to wait humbly in the use of these ordinances, where they may be had; but where they cannot (which must happen in such places, as are destitute of a regular ministry, says the late Revd. Mr. *Jones*) we dare not say they are *absolutely* necessary, nor set limits to GOD's power and goodness. He by a word of his mouth can soften the hardest heart, (and often does so) and can carry on the divine life in a soul by extraordinary means; and all those, who are earnest in their enquiries after GOD, may expect (if they are deprived of the ordinary means) they shall be comforted by an inward communion with their Lord.

Having removed this difficulty: we proceed to enquire into and consider the nature and parts of a sacrament. It is an holy ordinance instituted by CHRIST himself, and contains *an outward and visible sign*, used according to CHRIST's own appointment; and *an inward and spiritual grace*, thereby signified. Or, as it is otherwise expressed, a sacrament *signifies, seals, and exhibits to those, who are within the covenant of grace, the benefits of CHRIST's mediation*. Assemb. Cat. Qu. CLXII.

A sacrament is called a *sign*, in which, by a visible action, some spiritual benefits are signified.

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As this is an undoubted truth; they certainly reproach GOD in his holy institutions, who deny sacraments to be divine ordinances, when they stile them all carnal ordinances, beggarly elements, or a re-establisment of the ceremonial law, without distinguishing between significant signs, that were formerly ordinances to the *Jewish* church, but are now abolished; and those, that CHRIST hath given to the church under the gospel.

In which idea of the sacraments, they bear some analogy with the preaching of the word: for, hereby CHRIST and his benefits are set forth, as objects of our faith; and the same ends are designed and attained by both, viz. our being affected with, and making a right improvement of the blessings purchased by him, together with our enjoying communion with him. But they differ, with respect to the way or means, by which CHRIST and his benefits are set forth: for in the preaching of the word there is a narrative of what he has done and suffered; whereas, in the sacraments, there is only a representation or memorial thereof by signs. Besides the sacraments are not designed only to instruct; but, by our act and deed, to signify our engagement under the banner of CHRIST.

Sacraments are also the *seal* of the blessings, which they signify; whereby GOD gives believers to understand, that CHRIST and his benefits are theirs: and whereby the faithful are obliged by faith as well as in an external and visible manner, to signify their compliance with his covenant: which may be called their setting to their seal, that GOD is true; alluding to that saying of our Saviour, *He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal, that GOD is true*, John iii. 33. Thus the sacraments are GOD's seals, as they are ordinances given by him for the confirmation of our faith, that he would be our *covenant* GOD; and they are our seals,
or

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or we set our seals thereunto, when we visibly profess, what we ought to do by faith also, that we give up ourselves to him, to be his people, and desire to be made partakers of the benefits which CHRIST has purchased in his own way.

The sacraments also, exhibit the benefits of CHRIST's mediation: which signifies, that they give or convey, communicate or apply those blessings to the worthy communicant, by the gift of divine grace, through the effectual working of the spirit.

Each sacrament does consist of two parts; the sign and the thing signified. By which division it is clearly to be understood, that a person may receive the *outward visible sign*, and be entirely destitute of the inward spiritual grace. Many a one has been baptized with water, who never received the HOLY GHOST: many others have received the bread and wine, who never received the body and blood of CHRIST. It is not the receiving the outward elements of water in *baptism*, or of bread and wine in the *Lord's-supper*, which constitutes a *christian*, unless he be made partaker of the inward and spiritual grace of the gospel covenant. It is not the outward homage or adoration of the elements, that will answer the end designed by them: it is not receiving the bread and wine ever so often, that will do, unless the *body and blood of CHRIST be received also*. They only, who are sensible, that they want a physician of the soul, and who pant after a knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, are here fitted by these ordinances. "The sacraments were not ordained of CHRIST to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them: and in such only, who worthily receive the same, they, says the church of *England*, have a whole-some effect or operation: but they that receive

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“ *them unworthily, saith the apostle St. Paul, purchase to themselves damnation.*”

Hence we are led to enquire, who they are, to whom the sacraments are given : and we find them to be such as are within the covenant of grace ; not all, who live externally in covenant with GOD, or profess CHRIST, and receive his ordinances : but they only, who are internally and spiritually with GOD, have put on CHRIST, and dwell with him, who are members of CHRIST, and children of GOD by faith. These are they, who have the same mind as was in CHRIST, and receive vital influences from him, being made partakers of the spirit : who have not only professedly, but by faith, embraced him in all his offices, surrendered up themselves to him, to be entirely his : yielded their understandings to be guided and directed, their wills and affections to be governed by him, and are desirous to be disposed of by him, in the whole course of their abode upon earth.

The benefits, which are communicated in the sacraments by CHRIST to his people, are both relative and external, as well as internal and spiritual. For, hereby *Christians* are distinguished from those that are without. And tho’ they are not, in this sense, of a saving nature, they are advantages, according to the apostolic reasoning, where it being asked, *What advantage hath the Jew ; or, what profit is there in circumcision ?* The apostle answers, *Much every way*, or in many respects ; as, it is an honour bestowed by GOD on his church, by taking a select people into a visible relation to himself, and bestowing on them the means of grace, which are hidden from the rest of the world.

But it is in the internal and spiritual sense, these benefits are most valuable, and to be sought for by us. Hereby we have an opportunity, not only to

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exercise a mutual love amongst the faithful; but to have communion with CHRIST, and fellowship with the HOLY GHOST: by which the work of grace begun in the soul is carried on; our love to CHRIST, and our interest in him is enhanced, and we are powerfully restrained from sin, and prevailed upon to hate whatever tends to dishonour GOD, grieve his holy spirit, and forfeit our interest in the merits of our dear Redeemer.

Of BAPTISM.

“ *Baptism* is not only a sign of profession and
 “ mark of difference, whereby christian men
 “ are discerned from others that be not *christened*:
 “ but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new-
 “ birth; whereby, as by an instrument, they that
 “ receive baptism rightly, are grafted into the church;
 “ the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our
 “ adoption to be the sons of GOD, by the HOLY
 “ GHOST, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is
 “ confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer
 “ unto GOD.” Art. of Religion xxvii.

Go ye, saith our Saviour to his ministers, the apostles, *and teach all nations*, (the covenant of grace and their duty) *baptizing them* (that shall believe in my name, and are converted and turn from the evil of their ways at your preaching) *in the name of the father*, (who sent me to redeem mankind) *and of the son*, (who only is able to satisfy the divine justice for the sins of the world) *and of the HOLY GHOST*, (who shall be given by the father and the son, to guide them into the way of all truth) *teaching them to observe all things* (both in faith and practice) *whatsoever I have commanded you*, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. And JESUS appointed this to be a standing ordinance in his church, throughout all ages thereof;

and therefore proceeds with this promise to *be with* his ministers, in fulfilling the commission that he had given them to execute, *unto the end of the world*: and as this commission is to be executed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the HOLY GHOST, we consider baptism to contain in it a solemn dedication of the person baptized to the three divine persons; and to be an act of religious worship, in which GOD's supreme right to the person baptized, is publicly acknowledged, and an intimation given, that all saving blessings, which are desired, or expected in this ordinance, are given by the Father, through a mediator, purchased by the Son, and applied by the holy Spirit. Thus they who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and HOLY GHOST, are devoted thereby to be professedly their servants and subjects; under an indispensable obligation to put their trust in, and hope for, all saving blessings from them, upon the terms of the gospel covenant.

It is very evident from the literal meaning of the word *baptize*, (which signifies to *wash* or purify with *water*) that the *outward visible sign* of this sacrament is to be *water*, wherein the person is to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and HOLY GHOST. So that *water* is a fit sign to denote our being washed from sin, by virtue of the blood of CHRIST, and is here made an emblem of the *holy Spirit* of GOD, and of his gracious operations. As water serves to cleanse and purify the body: so does the spirit of GOD operate on all, who receive this ordinance rightly, and cleanses and purifies the soul. Therefore it is expressly written, *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD*: which proves the necessity and usefulness of *water baptism*, enjoined by CHRIST himself.

We shall now proceed to enquire into the other part of this sacrament included under these words, *the inward and spiritual grace*: this, according to the most sound divinity, is *a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness*: for, being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace. This is the thing signified: every man by nature, is a child of wrath: we are born in sin, and have a propensity from the womb to nothing that is good: *the thoughts of man*, in his natural state, *are only evil continually*. Nothing less than an almighty spirit can renew a heart, and bring it home to GOD. All, who desire to partake of eternal happiness, must experience this baptism of the holy spirit. Sinners are first drawn by the spirit of GOD, to a serious consideration of gospel truths; they are convinced of sin, enabled to see their own wretched state, and their need of a redeemer; are humbled under a sense of their own transgressions, and are made to see their interest in CHRIST; are comforted under a sense of these things; know by happy experience, that the Lord JESUS is indeed their GOD, and they are assured that their sins are forgiven; *the spirit itself bearing witness with their spirits, that they are the children of GOD*. This is the inward and spiritual grace. For the grace annexed to the outward ordinance in this sacrament, is *a death unto sin*. We become dead unto sin, that we may live unto GOD: and we must be *born again unto righteousness*: and this new birth we must experience in our hearts. They that have been *born of water*, should beg of GOD to *baptize them with the HOLY GHOST, and with fire*. All our faculties, our understandings, wills and inclinations, must be renewed and sanctified by the spirit of GOD, if we expect to enter into the joy of our Lord, and into the kingdom of our GOD.

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It is then a matter of the utmost consideration, and of the last importance for every *Christian* to ask himself, whether he has been *baptized with the HOLY GHOST*, as well as with *water*? Has he seen his own blindness and wretchedness? Has he by faith seen *CHRIST* his redeemer? Has he seen by the same faith, his sins pardoned in his blood? Is the *HOLY GHOST* come upon him, and taken up his abode within him? Is he led by the spirit of *GOD*? Is his corrupt nature cleansed? Does he abhor and detest all sin and wickedness, and *long to be dissolved, and to be with CHRIST*? And finally, has he felt the spirit of *GOD* speaking peace to his heart, and finds *all joy and peace in believing*? If so, happy is he. But if he has not experienced these blessed effects, he has never been baptized. He may have been admitted into the outward church; the outward ordinance by *water* has been administered to him; but, unless he has been made partaker of the divine nature, he cannot be a whit the better. For, as *baptism* is called our *regeneration*; it cannot be said that any one is regenerate, while his heart is a stranger to *GOD*, and he continues in sin. What a contradiction would it be to call a man a regenerate drunkard; a regenerate sabbath-breaker; a regenerate blasphemer; a regenerate whoremonger; a regenerate adulterer? Yet there are many such, who would be highly affronted, should they be told, that they are no *Christians*. A title, to which none have a right, but such as are baptized with the *HOLY GHOST*, as well as with *water*; which can be of no service to the person baptized, without regeneration, or the new birth.

But all, who are baptized with the *HOLY GHOST*, do immediately *pass from death unto life*: for they, who by nature were born in sin, are hereby (by the regenerating efficacy of the blessed spirit) made the *children of grace*.

We must experience this change in ourselves from the qualifications required in all persons, who would receive baptism rightly; of whom it is required, that they repent from the bottom of their hearts of all their sins; be convinced of their own wretched state by nature; come humbly to the throne; have faith in CHRIST, and believe, that GOD will make good all the promises in his word. This is to *have repentance towards GOD, and faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST*; which are, what our Lord ordered his apostles, and in them all succeeding ministers, to preach to men, that they may obtain *remission of their sins*; and what the church of England requires of persons to be baptized, namely, repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith, *whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of GOD made to them in that sacrament.*

It is further a duty on our part to *improve* our baptism. A duty absolutely necessary, tho' much neglected; because many, entertaining very low thoughts of this ordinance, and not understanding its spiritual intent or meaning, nor the advantages gained by its improvement, account it no more than a mere external rite, established by custom amongst *Christians*, without duly weighing the end and design for which it was instituted, and what is signified thereby.—Others look upon it only as a public declaration, that the person baptized is made a *Christian*; but know not what it is to be a *Christian* indeed, being utter strangers to the life and power of religion, and the spiritual blessings hoped for, or, through the grace of GOD, consequent upon our baptismal dedication. And some, who have right apprehensions of the sign and of the thing signified thereby, do not seducially give up themselves to GOD, nor desire the spiritual and saving blessings of the covenant of grace; thro' the prevalency of corruption, and the pride and deceitfulness of their hearts.

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Therefore, it is our indispensable duty, when we are present at the administration of this sacrament, not to behave ourselves as unconcerned spectators; but to join herein with suitable acts of faith, and prayer, and to adore the blessed Trinity, whose name and glory are mentioned in the form of baptism. We ought also to apply ourselves to God for the grace of the covenant signified thereby; that he would be our God, as well as the God of the person, who then is particularly given up to him in that ordinance. Then let us bewail the universal depravity of human nature, and that guilt, which we bring with us into the world: and entertain becoming thoughts of the virtue of the blood of CHRIST, and of the power of the HOLY GHOST, which only can take away the guilt of sin, and render this ordinance effectual to salvation: which we are to desire, not only with respect to the person baptized; but that we ourselves may be made partakers of that grace, of which we stand equally in need. Let us also with shame and sorrow confess before God, our own deficiency in the improvement of our baptismal engagements; and let us adore and acknowledge the goodness and faithfulness of God, who is long-suffering, full of mercy, and faithful in all his promises to them, who draw nigh to him; tho' we have departed sometimes from our duty thro' the deceitfulness and treachery of our hearts.

Our *baptism* is particularly to be improved in time of *temptation*; in order to our resisting it, and preventing any evil effects therefrom. Should we be tempted to forget God, in a state of prosperity, our baptismal engagements should remind us of our dedication to God, who is a portion of more value than all the world can afford: and therefore we ought to be content with our portion in the almighty, and say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee;*
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and there is nothing upon the earth, that I desire besides thee, Psal. lxxiii. 25. If we are tempted by losses and the miseries of life to repine at the providence of GOD: our baptism informs us, that when we were thereby given up to GOD, we engaged not to question the care and justice of his providence; and to be satisfied and content with whatever he allots for us. Therefore in the days of affliction, when GOD pleaseth to try us, we are hereby taught to say, *It is the Lord, let him do with us what seemeth good in his sight.* If we are exposed to the temptations of satan, or those inward suggestions, whereby sinful objects are presented to our thoughts, and a false gloss put upon them, to induce us to a compliance therewith, we are to resist those suggestions, by considering that our baptismal covenant contains a solemn acknowledgment of GOD's right to us, exclusive of all others: which will keep us steadfast in our duty to GOD. And if we are afraid of being ensnared by those wiles and methods of deceit, which satan often employs, and are not always discerned by us, we are to consider ourselves devoted to CHRIST in our *baptism*, and that we have nothing to fear, if we continue stedfast in the faith, nothing wavering. Moreover, when we are assaulted, and, as it were, wounded with satan's fiery darts, whereby great discouragement is thrown in the way of our spiritual life: the guilt of our sins represented as unpardonable, and the stain and pollution of our transgressions, as can never be washed away: and when we are ready to conclude that our state is hopeless, and the blessings of heaven irrecoverably lost; tho' this is a most afflictive state; nevertheless our baptism will comfort us in this extremity, with the promises of GOD, made to us in that sacrament, of remission of sins. It will make us sensible, that no sin is greater than GOD's mercy: that let our sins be ever, so many, or ever so heinous, the blood
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of CHRIST is sufficient to satisfy divine justice, and to cleanse us from all sin; and that, as we were given up to him, in hope of obtaining this privilege, and have been from time to time enabled to give up ourselves to him by faith, and therein to improve our baptismal engagements; we must trust that he will appear for us, rebuke the adversary, and establish our comforts.

Again: our baptism affords matter of deep humiliation to the unregenerate; for as much as they being devoted to GOD, called by his name, and made partakers of the external blessings of his covenant, they have alienated themselves from the life of GOD, and live, as strangers to the internal saving blessings thereof. There was a profession made in *baptism*, that they stood in need of CHRIST's mediation, to deliver them from the guilt of sin; and of being cleansed from the pollution thereof, which spreads thro' the whole race of mankind: but the unregenerate have, notwithstanding this profession, given way to the pollution of sin; and how *pure* soever they have been *in their own eyes*, they are *not yet washed from their filthiness*, Prov. xxx. 12.

Such, therefore, may take occasion from hence to plead earnestly with GOD for converting grace; the only way whereby to know his acceptance of their solemn dedication to him; or that they are born of the spirit, and made partakers of the thing signified in baptism; without which the external sign can afford no saving advantage.

We may also plead with GOD, that as we are professedly his by baptism, he would assert his own right to us, overcome us to himself, and make us *willing in the day of his power*, Ps. cx. 3.

They that are in a state of grace, ought constantly to be improving their baptismal covenant, in order to the growth and increase thereof; especially when they feel a decline in their spiritual life; a

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deadness and stupidity in holy duties, and stand in need of being quickened, excited and brought into a lively frame of spirit, or to be restored after great backslidings. They that would have sin mortified, and the secret workings thereof in the heart subdued, ought to consider, that by being *baptized into JESUS CHRIST*, they were *baptized into his death*; and that therefore *sin should not reign in their mortal bodies*; but that they are obliged by the covenant to *walk in newness of life*.

Should any be destitute of the assurance of his love, and of an interest in CHRIST, they ought to improve the consideration of their being his, not only by a professed dedication, but by a federal connection with him. A consideration, which will encourage us to hope, that he will enable us to walk before him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; whereby the life of faith, which consists in an entire dependance on GOD, and practical religion, will be promoted.

In regard to our *neighbour*, our baptismal engagement is also to be greatly improved: for, as we are *all baptized by the spirit into one body*, 1 Cor. xii. 13. we are thereby exhorted to walk in brotherly love. They, who are partakers of the saving blessings signified by baptism, have ground to conclude themselves members of CHRIST's mystical body, the invisible church, of which he is the head: this is a spiritual baptism, being the effect of divine power, and the special work of the HOLY GHOST; and ought to be an inducement to all those, who are partakers thereof, to walk together in brotherly love, as persons favoured with the same privileges, and hope to enjoy the same complete happiness, in which they, who were before devoted to CHRIST, shall be for ever with him.

THE PRAYER.

Almighty God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; grant me the true circumcision of the spirit, that my heart and all my members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, I may in all things obey thy blessed will, and as I was baptized into his death, so by continually mortifying my corrupt affections, I may be buried with him, and pass thro' the grave of death to a joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died and rose again for mankind, thy Son JESUS CHRIST, my Lord and Saviour.
Amen.

Of the LORD'S SUPPER.

BY the xxviiiith Art. of Religion we are taught, "That the SUPPER of the LORD is not only
 " a sign of the love that *Christians* ought to have
 " amongst themselves, one to another; but rather it is
 " a *sacrament* of our redemption by CHRIST's death.
 " Inasmuch, that to such, as rightly, worthily,
 " and with faith receive the same, the *bread* which
 " we break, is a partaking of the *body* of CHRIST;
 " and likewise the *cup* of blessing is a partaking of
 " the *blood* of CHRIST."—Remembering always,
 " that the body of CHRIST is given, taken and
 " eaten in the *supper*, only after an heavenly and
 " spiritual manner: and the *mean*, whereby the
 " *body* of CHRIST is received and eaten in the sup-
 " per, is FAITH." And in the xxixth Art. it is
 " declared, "That the wicked, and such as be void
 " of a lively faith, altho' they do carnally and vi-
 " sibly press with their teeth the *sacrament* of the
 " *body*

"*body and blood of CHRIST* ; yet in no wise are
 " they partakers of *CHRIST* ; but rather, to their
 " condemnation, do they eat and drink the sign,
 " or sacrament of so great a thing."

In this doctrine are set forth the *cause*, the *na-
 ture*, the *benefits* and *advantages* of a *worthy* receiving
 of the *LORD'S SUPPER* ; and the *danger* of receiv-
 ing it *unworthily*.

The *cause* or reason of its institution was, that it
 might be a *continual memorial of the sacrifice of the
 death of CHRIST*, and of the *benefits, which we receive
 thereby*.—It was instituted by *CHRIST* at his last
 supper ; and he commanded his disciples, whom he
 left to minister to his church in holy things, to hand
 it down to *all* succeeding ages, in remembrance of
 him, and of his death and passion ; that they might
 continually in this visible ordinance, be sensibly con-
 vinced of the spiritual blessings conveyed to all worthy
 receivers thereof ; and that all believers thus convinced
 of the benefits received by the faithful in the *LORD'S
 SUPPER*, should continually or often receive the
 same : by which they do not only profess their re-
 membrance or belief, that such a one as *CHRIST*,
 did formerly live upon the earth ; but that the same
CHRIST, to their unspeakable comfort was *their
 SACRIFICE*, and died for *their* sins ; for *the sacrament
 of the LORD'S SUPPER was ordained for a continual
 remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST,
 and of the BENEFITS, which we receive thereby* ; and
 are that pardon and peace, which arise to the wor-
 thy communicant from the bitter death and passion
 of the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

Herein also *Christians* are put in mind of that
love, by which they are known to be the *disciples of
 CHRIST*. For, the several terms, by which this sa-
 crament is expressed in scripture, confirm that this
 institution is a token of the *love*, that *Christians*
 ought to maintain amongst themselves. It is called
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the *Lord's table*, the *Lord's supper*, a communion of the *body of CHRIST*; and they, that partake thereof, though they be *many*, are said to be *one bread*, and *one body*, 1 Cor. x. & xi. than which nothing can more strongly recommend *christian* love and charity.

Therefore the apostles, after our Lord's ascension, were frequent in the administration of this ordinance, *breaking bread from house to house*. And the primitive *Christians* were so scrupulously exact in the observance of this holy institution, that they seldom or ever assembled for devotion, and never on the *Lord's day*, without partaking of the holy eucharist.

This *sacrament* in its nature, consists of an *outward visible sign*, and an *inward and spiritual grace*.

The *outward visible sign* in the LORD'S SUPPER is *bread and wine*. For, if we may be permitted to reason upon the propriety of these elements, or enquire why *CHRIST* ordained *bread and wine*, rather than any other sign for the conveyance of his benefits to us, let it be humbly observed, that as *bread* is universally allowed by men to be the *staff of life*, or the main support of our animal life, nothing could be pitched upon by our Lord, to give us a truer idea of his *body*, which is the *staff of our spiritual life*, and the chief support of our souls, than *bread*: therefore *CHRIST* saith, *I am the true bread which came down from heaven: the bread which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*. As for the symbol of *wine*, that generous exhilarating liquor, that raiseth drooping spirits, and maketh glad the heart of man, it is a proper emblem of our Redeemer's *blood*, that sovereign restorative from spiritual gloominess and despondency.

Thus, nothing could better represent the cheering influences of the *body and blood of CHRIST*, applied to the souls of believers. As bread tends to

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support, and wine to nourish the body; so do the *body and blood of CHRIST* support, nourish and preserve the soul of every true believer. And as these are the *outward signs, which CHRIST has commanded to be received*; it is our bounden duty to receive these elements of *bread and wine* in the way and manner appointed by him: for altho' the receiving the outward elements alone, as the wicked do, is by no means communicating with CHRIST; yet as these signs were instituted by CHRIST himself, they are the only channels, thro' which he has promised to convey grace and peace to every receiver. CHRIST has commanded us to use the means, when *he brake the bread*, and said, *Take, eat, this is my body*: when he also *took the cup*, and said, *Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins*; and closed all with this affectionate and solemn command, *This do in remembrance of me*.

Yet they that rest in the outward form, can never obtain the blessed advantages of this sacrament worthily received. The bread and wine will be of no benefit to us, unless they are made the means of sealing to our souls the comfortable effects of the body and blood of CHRIST; the thing signified; and *which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper*, or conveyed to the soul of every believer in this ordinance. God did not only give his son JESUS CHRIST to die for us, and to be a sacrifice for our sins, and to obtain for us pardon and peace; but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in this holy sacrament; and to fill us full of love and gratitude for the many sufferings of the blessed JESUS, and for the benefits we receive thereby.

Let us therefore, apply this doctrine in the words of a pious writer: "The true believer, says the revd. Mr. Jones, who approaches the holy table with
" humble

" humble reverence and godly fear, beholds the sa-
 " viour, whom his soul seeketh after ; he is enabled
 " by the spirit of GOD to see his redeemer expiring
 " on the cross for his salvation ; in his eyes the mang-
 " led body of the crucified JESUS is evidently set
 " forth in the bread broken ; in his eyes the copi-
 " ous streams of his master's precious blood are
 " clearly visible in the wine poured forth.—How is
 " he melted into tears of holy joy ! How is he ef-
 " fected, when he reflects on his sins, which oc-
 " casioned these sufferings ! How is he humbled
 " under a sense of his own unworthiness ! Again :
 " how is he comforted, when he sees his help laid
 " on one willing and mighty to save ! How is he
 " transported, when he sees his sins nailed to his
 " redeemer's cross ! when he sees that redeemer
 " has procured his pardon, and of GOD *is made un-*
 " *to him, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification,*
 " *and redemption !* and the humble returning peni-
 " tent not only sees these things in the outward
 " elements by the eye of faith ; but by the same
 " glorious principle, he receives the body and blood
 " of his dying master. O, what comfort must that
 " soul experience, with whom the blessed JESUS
 " vouchsafes to dwell."

This is the real case of a worthy communicant.
 He spiritually eats the flesh of CHRIST, and drinks
 his blood : he is one with CHRIST, and, CHRIST
 with him : CHRIST dwelleth in him, and he in
 CHRIST. GOD grant that every soul that goes to
 the holy table may feel this effect. This should
 induce every serious and sincere *christian* to slip no
 opportunity of receiving this holy ordinance. For,
 they who neglect this duty, know not what inesti-
 mable benefits they rob themselves of : because all
 who receive this ordinance rightly, do actually per-
 ceive and know, that the Lord JESUS is present
 with them, as it is implied in this text, *The cup of*
blessing.

blessing, which we bless, is it not the COMMUNION of the blood of CHRIST ? The bread which we brake, is it not the COMMUNION of the body of CHRIST ? In this sacrament the faithful enjoy sweet intercourse and delightful communion with their saviour, and he communicates to them all spiritual gifts and graces. They also enjoy *christian* communion with their brethren, and feel their souls enlarged with love and charity towards all their master's servants.

But when it is said that CHRIST is *really present* to the faithful in this divine ordinance, it does not speak of a *corporeal presence*, according to the flesh, which the son of GOD assumed in this world ; but of a *spiritual presence*, by virtue of the *Godhead* of our redeemer. CHRIST's body sitteth on the right hand of GOD the father in heaven, not on earth : neither can his human nature be in more places than one, at the same time. It is then *by faith*, that we receive the body and blood of CHRIST, *under* the symbols of bread and wine, and not *in* them, which suffer no change, as to their substance, in their consecration to sacred uses. The very thought of their being converted by a priest, into the body and blood of CHRIST, would border very nearly upon blasphemy ; and to think that the elements are so changed, as to become the gross and material body and blood of CHRIST, and therefore, objects of our adoration and worship, would be abominable idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful *christians*.

Here let the communicant not only beware of false doctrine, and of being led astray into wrong and sinful notions of this holy ordinance ; but careful of his own state and condition, when he receives the *Lord's supper*. Let him that has received the bread and wine ask himself, whether he has received the body and blood of CHRIST ? should he imagine the end of his coming to the Lord's table is answered by receiving the outward visible sign alone, he

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would be guilty of the very same absurdity with those, who imagine they have received the HOLY GHOST, because they have been baptized with water.—Such a one ought to ask his own heart, have I this day met the Lord JESUS at his holy table? If he has, he cannot but know it: if a man is freed from pain, under which he has laboured, he cannot but be sensible of that freedom; and if he has been freed from the weight of sin in his communion with CHRIST, he cannot but know it. If there still remains an insensibility of natural corruption, and of the necessity of a saviour, he must not fail, the next time he repairs to the holy table, to beg of GOD to manifest himself to him, and to *send forth the spirit of his son into his heart, that he may be enabled to cry, Abba, Father*; which is the privilege of all true believers, whereas they, who receive unworthily, *eat and drink damnation to themselves*: they are in a state of separation from GOD, while they thus receive: and if they are not unworthy receivers, who pride themselves in taking the outward sign, who do not see that they are lost, undone sinners, and who do not desire to be clothed with the righteousness of CHRIST, it will be difficult to ascertain who are unworthy receivers.

However this ought not to discourage the use of this ordinance. Far otherwise. It is an argument for frequent communion, and for the necessity of often coming to the feet of JESUS in this ordinance, with a just sense of our own unworthiness. He that would profit by receiving this sacrament, must divest himself of all arrogance and self-conceit: he must not value himself upon his own works and observance of this ordinance, and think to merit heaven by it: but he must humble himself, acknowledge his own ignorance and unworthiness, go as a beggar, sensible of his want, and imploring the mercy of an angry GOD, thro' the mediation of his

beloved Son.—GOD give us all this disposition of mind, whenever we approach his holy table !

The *benefits* whereof the worthy communicant is made a partaker in this sacrament, is *the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of CHRIST* ; as *our bodies are by the bread and wine* : for as *bread and wine*, considered only as *natural food*, strengthen and refresh our bodies : so this *bread and wine* considered and taken, as memorials of the body and blood of CHRIST our master, lead us, by their peculiar tendency, to all such thoughts and practices, as are indeed the improvement and health of our souls.---And if our bodies, after being for some time weak and languid, are refreshed and restored to their former vigour by a supply of food, or any other means, we must be sensible of it ; we must know it ; we must experience a difference between a state of weakness, and a state of health in the body. Just so it is with the soul, if our souls have been faint and languid, and feel themselves refreshed, comforted and strengthened with the presence of our Saviour conveyed into them by the means of this ordinance, we must know, we must feel the change from the death of sin to a life of righteousness, and we must perceive the spiritual life and growth in our hearts. They that are not made thus sensible of a worthy communion, have great reason to fear, they are not strengthened nor refreshed.

In this ordinance, our souls are strengthened by the most solemn exercise of our faith, and other religious acts, 1 *Tim.* iv. 7. *Heb.* v. 14. and by that supernatural grace, which we receive from this spiritual food, to enable us for the better performance of our *christian* duty for the time to come, *John* vi. 56. 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. *Phil.* iv. 13. *Matt.* xxv. 29. Our souls are also refreshed by the comfortable assurance thereby given us of God's favour and

gracious goodness towards us, *Rom. viii. 32. 1 John iv. 9. John xiii. 1.*

From the premises it follows, that when we come to the *Lord's table*, we are to eat the bread *in remembrance*, that CHRIST's body was broken for us, and that the same body is then *spiritually* and *really* communicated to us; and to drink the wine, *in remembrance* that CHRIST's blood was shed for us, and that the same blood is then *spiritually* and *really* communicated to us, esteeming and receiving these elements not as common bread and wine; but as consecrated to represent the body and blood of JESUS CHRIST, to all spiritual intents and purposes; and firmly believing, that we shall verily and indeed partake of all those graces and blessings, which CHRIST merited for mankind by his death; and which this sacrament was designed to convey to every one, that comes holy and clean to such an heavenly feast; in the marriage garment required by the gospel. Which brings us to consider, what *preparation* is required in those, who come to this holy ordinance.

A man must examine himself, saith the apostle, and then *eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*. Concerning what? The state of the soul. Whether there lurks any pride, or any other sinful idol in the heart? Whether he placeth any dependance for salvation upon his own righteousness? Whether he comes, as a lost undone sinner? Whether *he truly repents of his former sins*? Whether he has faith, that the *sacrifice* of CHRIST is all sufficient for the *redemption* of mankind? If he can't resolve these questions to his soul in the affirmative: he must beg of GOD to endue him with his spirit, and to fill him with these graces: and if he has them, but in an imperfect degree, and come humbly for help, GOD has promised to supply them, and to increase their store.

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Therefore, when any one purposeth to receive, let him beseech GOD to give him unfeigned repentance. For he must not pretend to approach the Lord's table, except he repent himself truly of all his former sins. They that are desirous of mercy, must repent of, and be sorry for those sins, which have separated between them and their GOD: they must resolve and earnestly desire by his grace and spirit, to lead a *new life*; they must detest and abhor former impurities, and long to live the life of faith. If this be not the frame of the communicant's mind, he can have no business, no communion with CHRIST at his table, or by this ordinance.

He must not only repent and lead a new life; but he must examine into his *faith*, whether he believes that GOD is able and willing to pardon us through the blood of the mediator? or, whether he believes there is no other name under heaven given to man, whereby we shall be saved, but only the name of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST? He must beg of GOD to make his faith lively, so as to lead him into all holiness of heart and life, and quickening him to a love of our redeemer, testified by a *thankful remembrance of his death*. For there's no purchasing heaven by our own merit. We must examine ourselves, whether we can gratefully call to mind the love of JESUS, dying the most bitter and ignominious death for us? Whether we are truly thankful to our redeemer for that sacrifice of himself on the cross, once offered for the sins of the whole world? Whether we endeavour to copy this love of our redeemer towards mankind by endeavouring, in our respective stations, to promote the happiness of all our brethren? and whether we can forgive them that have injured us, as we desire GOD for CHRIST's sake, to forgive us our sins?

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They that find themselves thus prepared, ought to give praise unto God ; for it is not to ourselves, but to his holy spirit, we are indebted for these gifts and graces. If we have not these requisites, we must implore the Lord, and beg of our God to cloath us with them. They that tremble at their sins, and come to JESUS with true sorrow for their offences, shall not be rejected. The Lord JESUS is a loving redeemer, and reaches out his hand to save every trembling soul that approaches him. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. They that convince him of their sincerity and desire of mercy, will be made welcome guests to enter into the joy of the Lord.

T H E P R A Y E R.

A Lmighty Lord and ever living God, by whose appointment thy only and beloved son was made man, and a sacrifice for sin, and did institute the holy sacrament of his body and blood, to be received in remembrance of his death and passion for the remission of sins, and the nourishment of the souls of thy faithful servants ; I adore this thy gracious goodness towards me and all mankind ; and offer and present unto thee, O heavenly father, my soul and body, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto thee ; humbly beseeching thee, that when I shall approach thy table, and receive the elements of bread and wine, I may be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and be found worthy in thy sight, not weighing my merits, but pardoning my offences, thro' the same thy Son, JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

Of Prayer and Devotion.

THEY that believe in JESUS CHRIST the mediator, interceding for us perpetually at the right hand of GOD, till the redemption of mankind shall be finished; must also acknowledge *prayer* to be a proper means of drawing nigh to GOD, or a necessary method of restoring sinners to his favour. Therefore, when we are in the spirit of prayer, when our hearts are lift up to GOD, breathing out holy petitions to the throne of grace, we are encouraged to be constant and fervent in it; because we then join with an intercession, at the right hand of GOD, and are doing that for ourselves on earth, which our blessed Saviour is doing for us perpetually in heaven.

Devotion is neither public nor private prayers: but prayers, whether public or private, are particular parts or instances of devotion, which signifies a life given, or devoted to GOD. So he only is the devout man, who lives no longer to his own will, or in the way and spirit of the world; but to the sole will of GOD, and in the ways of his commandments, making all the parts of his common life, parts of piety; by doing every thing in the name of GOD, and under such rules as are conformable to his glory.

Devotion is to be considered an exercise of public or private prayers, at set times, and on particular occasions; and more properly a temper of mind, or a state and disposition of the heart, which shall be rightly affected with such spiritual exercises.

External acts of devotion, like other external actions, are very liable to delusion and falseness, and can be no otherwise good and valuable, than as they

proceed from a right disposition of the inward man. GOD alone is to be the rule and measure of our prayers; in them we are to look wholly unto him, and not wholly for him: we are only to pray in such a manner, for such things, and for such ends, as are suitable to his glory. Therefore solemn prayers, rapturous devotions, unless the mind and heart be conformable to them, are but repeated hypocrisies, like zealous professions of friendship, where there is no sincerity of the heart.

Since it is the heart only that is devout towards GOD; since the regularity and fervency of the heart is the regularity and fervency of devotion, we shall treat of devotion chiefly, as a *state* and *temper* of the heart: for, it is in this sense only, that *christians* are called to a *constant state* of devotion, who can't be always on their knees in acts of prayer; but may continue always in the state and temper of devotion.

This may be illustrated under the practice of *friendship*, which does not require a continual waiting upon our friends in external services; these offices have their times and seasons of intermission: it is only the service of the heart, the friendship of the mind, that is never to cease. It is just so in devotion, by which we propose to express our love and friendship towards our GOD. Prayers have their hours, their beginning and ending: but that turn of mind, that disposition of the heart towards GOD, which is the life and spirit of prayer, is to be as constant and lasting, as our own life and spirit.

The repeating of the *christian belief* is at certain times, an act of faith; but that faith, which *overcometh the world*, stays neither for times nor seasons, but is a living principle of the soul, that is always believing, trusting and depending upon GOD. Likewise verbal prayers are acts of devotion; but that prayer, which penetrateth the gates of heaven, and
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holds an intercourse with GOD, stops not at *forms* and *manuals* of devotion; but is a language of the soul, a judgment of the heart, which worships, adores and delights in GOD, at all times, and all seasons.

The *necessity* and *reason* of *prayer* is founded in the nature of GOD; because he is the fountain and cause of all happiness; and in the nature of man; because he is weak, helpless and full of wants. So that prayer is *an earnest application or assent of the heart to GOD, as to the sole cause of all happiness*. He therefore that most truly *feels* the misery, corruption and weakness of his own nature; who is most fully convinced, that a relief from all these disorders, and a true happiness, is to be found in GOD alone; he, who is most fully convinced of these truths, is most fully possessed of the spirit of devotion and prayer.

Therefore, there is but one way to arrive at a true state of devotion; and that is to get right notions of ourselves, and of the divine nature: so that having a full view of the relation we bear to GOD, our souls may as constantly aspire to him, as they constantly aspire after happiness. We must practise all those ways of life, that may humble us in our own eyes: we must forbear all those indulgencies and vanities, which blind the heart, and give false notions of ourselves: we must seek that way of life, accustom ourselves to such practices, as may best convince us of the vanity of the world, and the littleness of every thing in comparison with GOD. They who cannot see their own littleness, nor the greatness of GOD: or seek for happiness in any thing but GOD, cannot be in a state of devotion; their prayers will not be heard. For, as we can desire nothing, but what we think we want; and desire it only in such a degree, as we feel the want of it; it is evident, that whatever lessens or abates the feeling of our own wants, whatever takes

from looking to GOD, as the only possible relief of them, must so far lessen and abate the spirit and fervency of our devotions and prayers.

Now let any one reason, why he ought to be thus strictly pious and devout in his prayers, and he will find the same strong reason to be as strictly pious or devout in all the other parts of his life. For, so sure as GOD must be the rule and measure of our prayers, and we must look wholly unto him, and pray according to his will, we ought to look *wholly* unto GOD, and to make him the *rule* and *measure* of all the other actions of our life. Any ways of life, any improvement of talents, whether of our parts, our time, or our money, that is not *strictly* according to the will of GOD, that is not for such *ends*, as are suitable to his glory, they are as great absurdities and failings, as prayers, which are not offered according to the will of GOD: for the same reasons subsist, for us to live unto GOD in the same spirit of wisdom and holiness, and heavenly temper, as we are obliged to pray unto him. Were it not our duty to live by *reason*, to devote *all* our actions in life to GOD, were it not absolutely necessary to walk before him in wisdom and holiness, and all heavenly conversation, doing every thing in his name, and for his glory, there would be no excellency or wisdom in the most heavenly prayers.

'Tis the want of considering this, that makes the lives of many people a mixture of mere ridicule. They shall at some *times* and *places* be strictly devout: but when the divine service is over, they are but like those, that seldom or never, frequent public worship. They become like the rest of the world in their way of life, in the manner of spending their money and time, in their cares and fears, in their pleasures and indulgencies, and in their labour and diversions. Hence it is we may see the loose part of mankind making a jest of those that
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are devout, when they see the devotion of many go no farther than their prayers, and that, when they are over, they live no more unto God, till the time of prayer returns again; but live by the same *humour* and *fancy*, and in as full enjoyment of all the follies of life, as other people.

So that the one and only way to be *devout*, is to see and feel our own weakness, the vanity of the world, and the greatness of God, as dying men see and feel them. It is as impossible to be devout without seeing things in this view, as it is impossible to be chearful without perceiving something in our condition, that is according to our mind. Hence, therefore, we may learn to admire the wisdom and divinity of the christian religion, which calls all its members to *humility*, *self-denial*, and a renunciation of *worldly tempers*, as a necessary foundation of piety and devotion. On this *practice* our Saviour first instituted his religion: on these conditions the apostles embraced it, and taught it to others; it was in these doctrines, that the primitive *Christians* became such worthy followers of our Saviour and his apostles; and as these doctrines are still in the gospel, we shall never find ourselves in a state of *christian* devotion, till they are found in our lives.

Devotion is like *friendship*, we hear of it every where; but find it no where. Thus devotion is every where to be seen in *modes* of worship, in *forms* of prayer or speech, and in outward adorations, but is in *reality* scarce to be found. Hence also it happens, that we see as much difference in devotion, as in the faces of Christians: for, wanting its true foundation, humility, self-denial, and a renunciation of the world, it has as many *shapes*, as there are *tempers* of men. Many people are thus far sincere in their devotions, that they would be glad to pray devoutly: they shall strive to be fervent; but never attain to it, because they do not take the only possible way. They never thought

of altering their lives, or of living differently from the rest of the world ; but hope to be devout merely by mumbling many prayers, or frequent reading of books of devotion, which is as odd a fancy, as if a man should expect to be happy, by reading discourses upon happiness. When these people dare take *christianity*, as it is offered to them in the gospel ; when they shall deny themselves, and renounce the world, as our Saviour exhorts his disciples, they will then have begun devotion.

All those texts of scripture, which call us to GOD, as our true and only good ; and which exhorts us to fulness of faith, hope, joy and trust in GOD, are to be considered, as so many exhortations to devotion ; because true devotion is only another name for the exercise of all these virtues. *Our conversation*, saith the apostle to the *Philippians*, *is in heaven* ; and as a reason and motive to this heavenly conversation, he addeth, *whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*, Phil. iii. 20. See also *1 Pet. i. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 20, &c.* So that the most powerful motive to heavenly mindedness, the plainest reason for our conversation in heaven, is our expectation of CHRIST's glorious appearance, when he shall come to put an *end* to the miseries of this life, and cloath us with the robes of immortality and glory. These truths much more effectually raise the heart to GOD, than any particular precepts to pray : they do not so much exhort, as carry the soul to devotion. He that feels these truths in his heart, feels himself devout. They leave a light upon the soul, which will kindle into holy flames of love, and delight in GOD. And then only we can be said *to live by faith and not by sight*, when the invisible things of a future state are the reason, the motive, and the measure of all our desires and tempers.

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It is to this state of devotion, that we are all called, not only by particular precepts, but by the whole nature and tenure of our religion. And as all states and tempers of the mind must be supported by actions and exercises suitable to them; so these actions strengthen and improve the habits from whence they proceed. It is the right disposition of the heart towards GOD, that leads people to outward acts of prayer; and it is the outward acts of prayer, that preserve and strengthen the right disposition of the heart towards GOD. Therefore, as we ought to judge of the significancy of our prayers, by looking to the state and temper of our heart; so we are to judge also concerning the state of our heart, by looking to the frequency, constancy and importunity of our prayers. For, as we are certain that our prayers are insignificant, unless they proceed from a heart rightly disposed: so unless our prayers be *frequent, constant, and full of importunity*, we may be equally sure, that our heart is not right towards GOD.

It may be objected from the words of our Saviour, that *long prayers* are inconsistent with the doctrine of the gospel, where it is written, *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathens do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking*, Matt. vi. 7. But this scripture is misapplied: for, it does not condemn, nor forbid the *length* or the *continuance* of prayer; but only *vain repetitions*, such as the *ave Mary's* or *bead prayers* so much in use amongst the *Papists*; in which, instead of praying, the same words are only often repeated. Again: the *heathens* are not here condemned for being *importunate and persevering* in their prayers; but for a *wrong judgment*, a false devotion; because they expected to be heard on account of their *much speaking*, or for often repeating the same words. So that all that *Christians* are forbid by this text, is only this; they

they are not to think that the *efficacy* of prayer consists in vain and long repetitions, but are to apply to God upon a more rational and better principle, a more enlightened devotion.

This is also clear by the authority of the blessed Jesus, who often retired into deserts, mountains and solitary places to pray, and spent whole nights in prayer, not to condemn, but to teach us by his example as well as doctrine, that we ought to be frequent, constant and importune in prayer. The parable of the widow and the unjust judge was delivered to this end; that men ought always to pray and not to faint: to recommend continuance, perseverance and importunity, as the most prevailing qualifications of prayer. The widow was relieved; not because she asked relief; but because she *continued* in asking it: and God is there also said to avenge his elect; not because they cry to him now and then, but because they *cry day and night*. Therefore says the apostle to the converts at *Thessalonica, Colosse, and Ephesus*, pray *without ceasing*; and *continue in prayer*; praying *always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit*, 1 Thess. v. 17. Coloss. vi. 2. Eph. iv. 17.

The most apposite text of scripture for the duty of prayer, is generally thought to be that of *Matt. vi. 6*. *Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray unto thy Father, &c.* in which indeed there is no mention of the *time*, that prayer is to be *continued*; yet the circumstances of *entering* into a closet, and *shutting* the door, are manifest indications, that we are not hastily to open the door, but to allow ourselves time to *continue* and be *importunate* with our heavenly father in our prayers.

One would think it impossible for people to be sparing in their devotions, and to wrest scripture in support of their folly or neglect of duty, who are taught

taught by our Saviour's parables, that the blessings of heaven, the gifts and graces of GOD's holy spirit, are given to such as are importunate in their prayers. And tho' it is not easy to direct how long and how often all people ought to pray by any one particular measure: yet we may venture to collect this general rule from our Saviour's doctrine and practice, that every *Christian* is in duty bound to pray so *often*, and so *long*, as to shew a perseverance and importunity in prayer, to shew, that he prays *without ceasing*; that he prays *always*, and that he *cries to GOD day and night*.

Frequent and continued prayers are most likely to beget in us the *spirit* of prayer. A man that is often on his knees to GOD, tho' he may for some time perform only a *lip-service*, will find the very labour or service of his lips altering the temper of his heart; and that he has learned to pray rightly, by praying often. In all parts of life man catches a spirit and temper from the conversation and ways of life, to which he is most accustomed. Use is a second nature, and experience teaches, that whatsoever we accustom ourselves to, it will by degrees transform our spirit and temper into a likeness thereof: and what is made *constant* and *familiar*, will by degrees steal the approbation of the heart.

Therefore, would we be often on our knees, putting up our prayers to GOD; tho' for a while it be no more than form and outward exercise; our hearts would by degrees learn the language of our tongues: the subject of our prayers would become the subject of our hearts; we might pray ourselves into real devotion, and it would become a part of us, in the same manner, that all other ways enter into our nature. Our reason and judgment would at last consent to our lips; and by saying the same things often, we should come to *believe* and *feel* them in a proper and spiritual manner. Consequently,
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they who are *hasty* in their devotions and prayers, and think a *little* will do, are strangers both to the nature of devotion, and to the nature of man; not knowing that they are to *learn* to pray, and that prayer is to be learned, as they learn all other things, by frequency, constancy and perseverance.

Continuance in prayer is also a great relief against the cares and pleasures of life, and against the levity, vanity and dulness of our minds; not only as it gives the heart leisure to relieve itself from worldly cares and concerns; but as it exerciseth the mind upon such subjects, as are likely to abate its vanity and distraction, and raise it into a state of seriousness and attention. The most devout must acknowledge, that they are inconstant in their *prayers*, joining heartily in some petitions, and wandering away from others. Therefore it is no more than common prudence to *continue* in our prayers, in order to give our minds an opportunity to join in some parts, when they may have wandered or strayed from some others. If we were masters of our own attention, and could be as fervent as we pleased, on all occasions, few words might then serve for our devotion: but seeing our minds are weak, confused, inconstant, and even ungovernable by any human art, we must endeavour to catch and win them to devotion, by such means as are suited to such a state of weakness, confusion, dulness, inconstancy and rebellion.

He that enters his closet in a hurry, only to repeat a short form of words, or a brief extemporary ejaculation, may pray all his life without any devotion; and perhaps he had been a devout man long ago, if he had been convinced that *meditation* and *continuance* in prayer are necessary to excite devotion. If a person should make it a *rule* to himself to *meditate* a while before he began his prayers; if he should seriously consider what prayer

is; what he prays for, and in whose presence, and to whom he prays; if again he should accustom himself to stop in some part of his prayers, in order to ask his heart, whether it *really* prays, or to let his soul rise up in silence unto GOD; prayers thus performed and assisted by meditation and continuance, would in all likelihood soon render the mind truly devout.

Let it not be understood, that any thing is here advanced for imposing *any particular method* upon all people. It is only intended to shew, that there are *certain means* of assisting our devotion; and some rules, tho' *little* in themselves, yet of great use to render our minds attentive and fervent in our applications unto GOD in prayer.

Frequent and continued prayer is the most powerful remedy against sin; not procuring divine grace and assistance, which is to be obtained by the merits of CHRIST only; but as it naturally convinces, instructs and fortifies the mind against all sin. For, every endeavour to pray, is an endeavour to *feel* the truth of our prayers; to *convince* our minds of the reasonableness and fitness of those things, that are the subject of our prayers. So he that prays most, is one that most labours to convince his heart and mind of the guilt, deformity and misery of sin. Therefore prayer, considered merely as an exercise of the heart upon such subjects, is the most certain way to destroy the power of sin: because so far as we pray, so far we *renew* our convictions, *enlighten* our minds, and fortify our hearts by fresh resolutions. Consequently we are to consider the necessity and benefits of prayer, not only as it is that which God hears; but also as it is that, which by its natural tendency, *alters* and *corrects* our opinions and judgments, and forms our hearts to such ways of thinking, as are suitable to the matter of our prayers.

NOVA

Now if prayer be allowed to convince the mind; frequency and continuance in prayer must be the most certain way to establish the mind in a steady, well grounded state of conviction. Therefore, they who argue for *short* prayers, upon the supposition that GOD does not *need* much intreaty, ought to shew, that the heart of man does not need assistance of *much* prayer; that it is so regular and uniform in its tendency to GOD; so full of right judgments and good motions, as not to need that strength and light and help, which ariseth from *much* praying. For, unless this be the state of our hearts, we shall want much prayer to *awake* and *move* ourselves, tho' little was necessary to excite the goodness of GOD. Therefore, if men would consider prayer, not only as it is an *invocation* of GOD; but also as it is an *exercise of holy* thoughts, as it is an endeavour to *feel* and be affected with the great truths of religion, they would soon see, that tho' GOD is so good, as not to *need* much calling upon; yet, that man is so weak, as to need much help, and to be under a constant necessity of that assistance, and light, and improvement, which ariseth from praying much, or continually.

If GOD does not give to us at our first asking: if he only gives to those who are *importunate*; it is not because our prayers make any *change* in GOD; but because our importunity has made a change in *ourselves*; it has altered our hearts, and rendered us proper objects of GOD's gifts and graces. If therefore, we would know how much or how long, or how often we ought to pray, we must consider how much our hearts want to be altered, and remember that the great work of prayer is to work upon ourselves: it is not to *move* and affect GOD, but it is to *move* and affect our own hearts, and fill them with such *tempers* as GOD delights to reward.

Prayer

Prayer is never so good a preservation against sin; it never so corrects and amends the heart, as when we *extend* it to all the particulars of our state and condition, enumerating all our wants, infirmities, and disorders; not because God needs to be informed of them, but because by this means we inform ourselves, and make our hearts in the best manner acquainted with our true condition. When our prayers do thus particularly descend into all the circumstances of our condition, they become a faithful glass to us, and so often as we pray, we as often see ourselves in a true light. You must not, therefore, be content with confessing yourself to be a *sinner*, or with praying against sin in *general*; for this can but a little affect your mind; it will only shew you to yourself in such a state, as all mankind are in; but if you find yourself out; if you confess and lay open the guilt of your own *particular sins*; if you pray constantly against such *particular sins*, as you find yourself most subject to, the *frequent sight* of your own sins, and your *constant exploring* of their guilt, will give your prayers entrance into your heart, and put you upon measures, how to amend your life. If you confess yourself only to be a *sinner*; you only confess yourself to be a *man*: for we are all transgressors from the womb, and born children of wrath. But when you describe and confess your own *particular* guilt, then you find cause for your own *particular* and godly *sorrow*, which worketh repentance, and then you give your prayers all the power they can have, to affect and wound the heart. Thus also, when you pray for God's grace, be not satisfied with a general petition; but make your prayers suitable to or expressive of your defects; and continue to ask for such gifts and graces of the holy spirit, as you find yourself most defective in: for this will not only give life to your petitions, and carry your heart
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along with them ; but will also be the surest means to fit and prepare you for such graces, as you pray for, and stand in need of.

It was in this view the church of *England*, in her short *Catechism*, declares that we are not *able of ourselves to do, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace*, and that we must learn at *all times to call for that grace by diligent prayer*. Here we are taught, that prayer is the mean we are to make use of: we have no hand in our justification: the whole is owing to the free grace of GOD in CHRIST JESUS: his spirit applies it to the sinner's soul: every step in the sinner's course, from his conversion to his glorification, is the alone work of his merciful redeeming GOD. He is to wait upon GOD in *humbleness of mind*, and *ask the bread of life of that father, who is nigh at hand to those that call upon him*, not to give them a stone, but to forgive the sins of them, who humble themselves, and pray and seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways.

Hence we collect not only the necessity, but the *requisites* of prayer. As when we draw nigh to GOD, we must do it with a just sense of our own *unworthiness*: with *faith* towards GOD; and with *love* to our brethren.

1. They who would pray to GOD for eternal life, must come to him and fall prostrate before his footstool, with a deep sense of their own unworthiness, sufficiently convinced, that they stand in need of his mercy, sensible that they are lost and undone, without his pardoning grace and redeeming love. We must see and know our own vileness and depravity, tied and bound with the chain of our sins, before we shall venture to pray to be renewed and sanctified: and if we consider, that we are by nature enemies to GOD, and that *every thought and imagination of our heart is only evil continually*; that

we must continue in this wretched state till the spirit of GOD be pleased to convert and breathe into us the breath of divine life; if we examine our hearts, and call to mind our manifold provocations of GOD, and our actual transgressions, and reflect upon the eternal weight of misery, which is the unavoidable consequence of sin unrepented of; if we consider, that it is not in our power to repent without the special grace of GOD preventing and assisting us, and that, if we die in an unconverted state, eternal destruction must inevitably be our portion, we cannot but desire an acquittance from our fears, and a deliverance from our dangers; there is nothing of such success in driving us to GOD, as a sense of our lost condition. When GOD is pleased to awaken a soul, and set its sins, with their several aggravations, before its face; how earnestly will that soul strive with GOD in prayer! when a sinner is convinced of his danger; when he sees no good in himself, when he finds no help, no place for refuge, how does he then fly to GOD! How does he *groan earnestly for deliverance, waiting for the adoption of GOD! renounces all vain confidence, all proud boasting in himself, and thankfully relies on the all-sufficient merits of JESUS CHRIST.* They then that are willing and contented to come to CHRIST as sinners, should be of good cheer: if they do not find an answer of peace immediately, let them pray on: for it is written, *The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* Trust in GOD, *continue instant in prayer, and depend upon it, GOD will hear you.*

2. Ask in *faith* or in the belief, that GOD will hear us, and is able to heal our wounds; that CHRIST is a redeemer able to deliver us, and that the blood of the everlasting covenant is sufficient to wash away our sins, be they ever so many, or ever so great. *All things are possible to him that believeth;*

lieveth; and whatsoever we shall ask in his name, says CHRIST, believing, we shall receive. Whatsoever we shall ask the father in his name, he will give it us.

If you cannot believe, then ask GOD for *faith*: ask it of GOD in CHRIST, and ye shall receive it. Perhaps your hearts may be so stony or hardened with sin, that ye cannot pray: then you can sigh, or at least, you can wish, that GOD would be merciful to you; and one wish from the heart, one single Lord JESUS *help me*, from a contrite soul, will find its way to the GOD of our salvation. Therefore watch unto prayer, pray without ceasing, beg the testimony of GOD's spirit with your own, that your sins be pardon'd, and beseech him that his *spirit may witness with your spirits, that ye are the children of GOD.*

3. To humility and faith we must add a spirit of *love* towards our brethren. *Christianity* is a communicative religion, and when we see our own danger, we shall see that of our brethren, and beg of GOD to convince us of it. This is called *intercession*, or praying for all mankind: and it is a most powerful expedient for stifling animosities amongst brethren. It is impossible to conceive the advantages arising from this sort of prayer. When a soul is mounting to the throne of GOD upon the wings of holy desire, and is pleading with him for another, as well as himself; when it imitates his blessed master in doing good, how is it warmed and delighted? Therefore let him, that has a *quarrel against a brother*, pray for him. This is a sweet revenge! it will enlarge the heart, and open the very soul: it unites the sins of our brethren with our own, and nails them to the cross of our redeemer.

He, that is thus qualified for prayer, has the greatest reason to expect to be heard: when the contrite soul comes humbly to GOD, and throws him-

himself upon his redeemer, is conscious of his own unworthiness and trusts in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, then saith the Lord, *I will hear from heaven; and I will forgive their sin.*

I shall conclude this subject with a pious and solid reflexion from a primitive father, who writes. "That by the ascent of our mind in prayer, we draw nigh to, and converse with GOD: he who hath no communication with GOD by prayer, is wholly estranged and seperated from him: and he who is thus cut off from GOD, must of necessity fall in with GOD's enemy the devil."

T H E P R A Y E R.

BLESSED GOD, eternal Father, who hast promised to hear them that pray to thee in thy son's name, give me a due sense of the mighty advantages, which accrue to mankind from that gracious promise: acquaint me in this time of my exercise, probation and trial with the employment of eternity: teach and help me to have communion and to converse with thee, my GOD, without ceasing, here in this world, by holy meditation, by heavenly ejaculations, and frequent application to thee by prayer and thanksgiving, and all other holy exercises; by constant intention to honour and serve thee, and by an exact walking according to the difference of good and evil, that when my frail body shall return to dust, my soul may readily join itself unto, and be received by the angels, thy ministring spirits, and the saints in glory, and together with them laud and magnify thy holy name for ever and ever, of whose grace and goodness, we have had so great experience all our days upon earth, thro' JESUS CHRIST thy Son, and my Saviour. *Amen.*

C H A P. V.

Of SELF-DENIAL and MORTIFICATION:
under which are included the chief PRAC-
TICAL DUTIES of CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY is a doctrine of the cross, which teacheth the restoration of mankind to the favour of GOD, by the death and sacrifice of his beloved son JESUS CHRIST. And this being the foundation of the *christian* religion, it shews, that such as desire to act conformably to the nature and reason of *christianity*, are called to a state of self-denial and mortification, or, in other words, to suffer for sin in their own persons. If *suffering* was the *necessary* atonement for sin in CHRIST: sinners cannot be excused from *suffering* in the flesh, the wages of whose sin is death.

There is the same reason in the nature of the thing, for sinners to endeavour to conform themselves to the *sufferings*, as to labour after the *holiness* of CHRIST: yet, saith the apostle, *Such a high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.*

If CHRIST had not joined *suffering* to *holiness*, his sacrifice had been deficient in an essential part. In like manner, if we think to be accepted of GOD by holiness without suffering, we seem to contradict the nature of our religion as much, as if we thought to be accepted thro' sufferings without holiness, *without which no man can see the Lord.* Not that this suffering of man is necessary to make the sufferings or sacrifice of CHRIST *more complete*, or to add a further value to the atonement for sin; but, self-suffering for sin, being a good and reasonable duty

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duty in itself, and proper for a sinner, the fulness of CHRIST's sacrifice has no more taken away the necessity of it, than it has taken away the necessity of humility, or any other virtue.

That CHRIST's sufferings have not made all other sufferings for sin needless, is evident from our being still subject to death, which is a suffering for sin. But if all *Christians* are to offer their bodies at death, as a *sacrifice* or *suffering* for sin, then it is certain that a state of self-denial and suffering, is the proper state of this life; because it must be proper to make every part of our life suitable to such an *end*.

Again: as the mortality of our condition is a certain proof that our life is in *disorder*, and *unacceptable* to GOD: so it is also a proof that we ought to refuse pleasures and satisfactions, which are the pleasures of a state of disorder; and to stay for joy and delights, till we are removed to such a state of perfection, as GOD will delight to continue to all eternity. *Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Which teacheth us the excellency and reasonableness of our Saviour's doctrine, who *said unto them ALL, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. For, whosoever will save his life, shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.* In which not the rich, not the poor; not the young, not the old; not the learned, not the unlearned; not the strong, not the weak; but ALL that would be the disciples of CHRIST, are called to deny themselves, and to take up their cross daily, or to suffer daily, by mortification and self-denial.

Self denial therefore and sufferings are duties essential to the present state of life, and recommend us to GOD, even as prayer, humility and charity, holiness and purity recommend us, and are acceptable thro' the merits of CHRIST. So long as the state of sin lasts, even so long does the necessity

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and reason of self-denial and mortification exist: they are as necessary as prayers and devotion, and are as truly essential parts of holiness, as humility and chastity. For, repentance and sorrow for sin, is as necessary to a being in a state of sin, as necessary on its own account, and from the nature of the thing, as the love of GOD is necessary from a being, that receives all his happiness from GOD. Therefore, whilst we continue in a state of corruption, it is as necessary that we continue in a state of repentance, self-denial and sorrow, as it is necessary to continue our desires and endeavours after holiness.

Thus, if they be of the same nature, and are practised for the same end, and also essential to true repentance, it follows, that all *Christians* are obliged to be as constant in their self-denials and mortifications, as they are to be constant in their repentance: consequently there is as much reason, why the *daily cross* or self-denial, be imposed upon *Christians*, as a daily prayer or repentance: and there is the same impiety, the same false judgment in refusing a daily self-denial, as in refusing and ceasing from a daily devotion and sorrow for sin. For, a man may as well imagine that he prays or gives thanks to GOD, when he only repeats the words of a prayer or thanksgiving, as that he repents of his sins, unless repentance be a real afflicting of his soul and body, a real punishment, and a true state of mortification.

If we consider, that repentance is the chief, the most constant and perpetual duty of a *Christian*; that our holiness has hardly any other existence, than what ariseth from a perpetual repentance; mortification and self-denial, must be essential and perpetual parts of our duty. For, if repentance be not an exercise of mortification and self-denial, it is no more a state of repentance than the lifting up

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of our hands without our hearts, is a state of prayer and devotion.

Repentance is a hearty sorrow for sin : sorrow is a pain or punishment, which we are obliged to raise to as high a degree as we can, in order to make us fitter objects of GOD's pardon. So that self-denial and mortification is only another name for a real repentance, which ought never to be laid aside in this life, because there is no time, when we are not under the guilt, and subject to the danger of sin. Not that this supposes, we are always to be uttering forms of confession with our tongues ; but that we are always to live with so much watchfulness, as becomes penitent sinners, and never do any thing, but what highly suits with a state of repentance. For while repentance is only a lip-work at stated times, it is nothing. It must enter into the state and habit of our lives, and render us as fearful of sin in every part of our lives, as when we are examining our conscience, and confessing our sins unto GOD, before it can take effect.

Hence also we learn the meaning of that promise made by CHRIST our Saviour ; where he says, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* In which we are directed to look upon *christian* mourning to be a state of life, and the blessedness promised to this state or temper of mind, shews that this mourning concerns all men, as such, without any distinction of *time* or *persons* : so that its excellency and fitness must be founded upon something that is common and constant to all times and all persons. It is a mourning, which mourns at that, which displeases GOD ; which condemns and rejects what the wisdom of GOD rejects ; which loosens us from the vanity of the world, lessens the weight of our corruption, and quickens our motions and aspirings towards perfection. This is not a mourning that shews itself in occasional fits of sorrow, or

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dejection of mind : but it is a regular temper, or a right judgment, which refuseth pleasures and the vanities of life. Therefore, if we desire to obtain the blessing promised, our mourning must be a constant abstinence from vain joys ; it must preserve itself by rejecting and disrelishing all those worldly delights and satisfactions, which, if admitted, would put an end to our state of mourning : for we generally reckon sorrow very near its end, when we begin to relish diversions and worldly amusements.

Blessed also are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The doctrine of this text is also the doctrine of self-denial and daily cross. For, no body can be poor in spirit unless he renounce those enjoyments, which are the proper delights of those, who are *high* and *rich* in spirit. He is *high* in spirit who rejoiceth in, and is proud of his state and dignity. He is *rich* in spirit, who seeks and delights in his riches, or those felicities or enjoyments, which they can procure. So he is *poor in spirit*, who mortifies all vain thoughts, rejects every self pleasure, and dislikes and avoids the empty satisfactions, which riches and fortune administer to the flesh, which is the very essence and soul of all self-denial and mortification : so that the blessedness of poverty of spirit, is the blessedness of self-denial and mortification.

No one is to reckon himself *poor in spirit*, till he not only rejects all instances of pride and self-enjoyment ; but seeks and desires things that are as proper to poverty of spirit, as food is proper to hunger, or water to thirst. For, every spirit or temper, can only be known by the nature of the things it covets. Thus if we be high minded, our care will be exercised about high things : again, if we be lowly in heart, we shall condescend and seek after things that are lowly.

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Let a man, therefore, who would deal faithfully with himself, consider not only whether he is *proud*, *luxurious*, *indulgent* of himself, and *devoted* to the pleasures and satisfactions of this life; but let him consider whether he be *poor in spirit*; whether the things that he seeks, the designs he has on foot, the happiness he aims at, and the course of his life, be such as is truly directed by a true poverty of spirit. And this is that self-denial, holy discipline, and daily cross, to which all *Christians* are called, and to which our blessed Saviour has promised the reward of heaven itself.

The doctrine of self-denial is remarkably and plainly taught in these words, where our Saviour saith, *Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but, I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but, whosoever will smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also: and if any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also: and whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain.* These words are so plain and express, that they need no illustration. They apply themselves; and they equally belong to all *Christians* in all ages. And the meekness and self-denial, which they enjoin, are highly suitable to the temper and spirit of christianity: to a religion, that restores sinners to GOD by sufferings: to such as have *forsaken all* to follow CHRIST: to such as are to be *dead* and *crucified* to the world: to such as are to be *meek* and *lowly* as CHRIST; and to such who are commanded to *love*, and to do all good to their most violent enemies, and who are to love their neighbour, as themselves.

We therefore forget the nature of our religion; we mistake the one great design of CHRIST's sufferings; we go out of the road to glory, if we do not patiently submit to sufferings: if we are not thankful that we *suffer with* CHRIST, we can't hope

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to reign with him. Even hereunto are we called to suffer wrongfully, because CHRIST also suffered wrongfully for us, *leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.*

Fasting is another branch of Self-denial and mortification. *Christians* are called from a state of disorder, sin and ignorance, to a state of holiness and resemblance of the divine nature. Therefore, as it is necessary to be holy, it is necessary to avoid every thing and way, that tends to corrupt our minds, support our vanity, increase our blindness, or nourish sensuality. And if there are any denials or mortifications, that purify and enlighten the soul, that lessen the power of bodily passions; that raise us to an heavenly affection, and make us taste and relish the things that be of GOD; they are as necessary to be practised, as it is necessary, in order to our salvation, to believe in JESUS CHRIST.

So that, if there are no indulgencies in *eating*, that do us harm, then *fasting* is of no use: but, if we find such indulgencies therein, as enslave the soul, and give it a sensual taste; then we are as much obliged to abstain from what does us this harm; as we are obliged to pray for any thing that can do us good.

Our Saviour therefore, has placed *fasting* along with secret alms, and private prayer, as a common duty of all Christians. *When thou prayest*, saith the son of GOD, *anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men that fast, but to thy father, which is in secret; and thy father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly*, Matt. vii. 15. where the same instructions, and the same reasons being given by our supreme legislature, for *fasting*, as for private almsgiving, and for private prayer, namely, that *thy father, which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly*; it is manifestly put upon the same footing, and is equally acceptable with GOD as private prayer.

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We are in duty bound to support the life of the body: but this duty is so to be practised, as to take care that our eating and drinking does not injure the health and life of the soul. The difference between the same man full and fasting, is almost the difference of two persons: a man, who, in the morning, finds himself fit for any meditations, is, after a full meal, changed into another creature, and fit only for idle amusements. He has not only created a dulness in his soul, but has perverted its taste; so as to be pleased with a *romance* or an *impertinent* history, when there is no relish for a book of devotion, that requires less attention. Because all our tempers and desires are always suitable to the state we are in: if we are in a state of sensual joy, feeling the happiness of a *full stomach* and *beated blood*, we relish and desire nothing, on such occasions, but what suits that state and temper. For which reason, a man, who has eat as long as he could, is entertained with *plays, romances*, and vain diversions; but would be lulled asleep with lectures of *morality* and discourses upon *death* and *judgment to come*.

Therefore, as it is the business of religion to deliver man from these blind laws of flesh and blood, and to give him a wisdom and constancy, a taste and judgment suitable to the reason and wisdom of the laws of God: so *fasting*, as it is a denial of bodily indulgencies; as it disciplines the body into a state of obedience, and contradicts its appetites, is the most constant and universal means of procuring liberty and freedom of mind.—It is the love of our body, and too much care of its enjoyments, that makes us too sensible of its demands, and subject to its tempers.—Whatever we nourish and cherish, so far gains an interest in us; and rules us in the same degree, that it has engaged our affections. Therefore, till religion has entered us into a state of self-denial, we

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live in a state, that supports the slavery and corruption of our nature. For, every indulgence of the body in eating and drinking, is adding to its power, and making all our ways of thinking subservient thereunto.—A man, that makes every day, a day of full and chearful meals, that *fares sumptuously*, like the rich man in the parable, *every day*; will by degrees forget GOD, and make the happiness of every day depend upon his sumptuous living, or upon much eating and drinking, and consider every thing with regard to his way of life.—He will go to *church*, or stay at home, as it suits with his *dinner*, and make no scruple to say, that he generally eats too heartily to go to the afternoon service: whereby he acknowledges that he has more taste for the preparations of the *kitchen*, than for the joys and comforts of the house of GOD.

Can such people think that they are *born again of GOD*; that they have the *spirit of CHRIST*; who are thus subject to the pleasures of gluttony? Can they be said to treat their bodies as *temples* of the HOLY GHOST, who make them unfit for the holy service of public worship? Can they be said to offer their bodies unto GOD, as a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice? Can they be said to *love GOD with all their heart, and all their soul*, or to have *forsaken all* to follow CHRIST, who will not so much as forsake *half a meal* for the sake of divine worship? Let them who render themselves indisposed for the public, or private worship of GOD, consider these things; and moreover, how opposite such a practice is to the command, *Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, Do all to the glory of GOD*.

It may be said, that *fasting* is not an *universal* duty; but only a *medicine* or *remedy*, necessary for some particular cases and constitutions. But then it is answered. There is a twofold fasting.—One is an abstinence from all food for a certain space of time.

time. But as *fasting* is not any *fixed degree* of abstinence from *all* food, which is to be the *common* measure of fasting to *all* men, in *all* states, and at *all* times ; no more than any *particular form* of confession, of such or such a length, is the precise nature of repentance : therefore fasting, in this sense, is not an universal and constant duty.—But the other kind of *fasting*, in which sense it is to be here understood, is an abstinence from such food, and such pleasures and degrees of feeding, as are proper in every state of life to destroy sensuality ; to lessen the corruption of nature, and to bring us to a relish and taste of spiritual enjoyments : therefore in this sense, fasting is as *constant* and *universal* duty as repentance. For, as *repentance* is an universal duty ; because the reason of it is common to all men : so this kind of *fasting* is necessary for all men ; because sensuality, fleshly lusts, and the corruption of bodily tempers, is the universal corruption of all mankind.---As it is no *fixed degree* of sorrow, that is the common repentance of all men : as it is no *particular sum* of mercy, that is the common charity of all men : as it is no *fixed form* or *length*, or *hour* of prayer, that is the common devotion of all men ; and yet all these are allowed to be *constant* and *universal* duties : so *fasting* may be subject to all the same variations, and yet be a *constant* and *universal* duty.

Public fasting, recommended by the church, or fixed on certain days by the civil power for national purposes, to divert God's judgments, or to imprecate his mercies and blessings, is praise worthy, and has its real advantages. But our duty is not complete under these circumstances. If we forbear the practice of this duty, till some great or national occasion happens again, or think that fasting is only *proper* for such *public occasions*, we know nothing of the nature of fasting. A man might

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with as good reason say, that he ought never to *repent*, or *pray*, but on those public occasions, as to imagine he is obliged to *fast* only on those occasions, or at such fixed times.

For, if we allow any benefit in fasting on those particular occasions: if it adds any thing to our piety and devotion: if it makes our repentance and sorrow for sin more real and affecting: if it calms and abates our passions, lessens the power of our body, and puts us in a better state of devotion; than when we take our usual meals, we must also acknowledge the necessity of the *frequent* practice of this duty, to affect the soul, to assist our devotions, to discipline our bodies, to allay our passions, to raise our hearts, to humble ourselves, not only on particular days, appointed by public authority; but in the intermediate time: to put off our *fasting* till a stated fixed time shall revolve, or be appointed by church or state, would be like staying till then, before we *repent*.

When the disciples of CHRIST could not cast the evil spirit out of a man, that was a *lunatic*, he not only tells them, that it was thro' want of *faith*; but also gives them an important instruction in these words, *Howbeit, this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting*, Matt. xvii. 21. Which scripture shews, that *fasting* is not an occasional thing, adapted only to the service of two or three days in the year; but that it is a proper way of devotion, or a right method of applying to God. And if that prayer be most prevailing, and enters farthest into heaven, which is attended with fasting, it must be confessed, that fasting is to be a common ordinary part of our devotion. Is it powerful enough to cast out *devils*, and to cure *lunaticks*; and shall we neglect this duty, when we pray against the evil tempers and passions, which possess our hearts, and against the temptations, which distract our minds? Ought we

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we not in this state of spiritual combat, to pray for God's grace in the most prevailing manner we can?

We are convinced of the duty of this part of self-denial: let us proceed farther, and we shall find also, that pride, hypocrisy, vanity, hatred and distraction, are all disorderly indulgences, and have their only cure in self-denial; which is the foundation of every virtue. For virtue is only a mere name, an empty sound, till it shews itself by an abstinence from all indulgences of the contrary vice.

THE PRAYER.

O Lord God, with whom is mercy and plentiful redemption, I must and do here acknowledge, to the humbling of my soul, for provoking thee; and to the glory of thy compassion, in sparing me, I acknowledge the great guilt that I have contracted, in making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, spending my time, care and pains, and substance, to feed the fleshly lusts, that war against my soul; as if all my felicity lay in pleasing the body, and I had no hope, but in this life. Be merciful, O God, I most humbly beseech thee: forgive me and heal me, and turn again my captivity; and set me free from the thralldom of my lusts; give me the spirit of self-denial and mortification, that I may take up the cross, follow CHRIST, crucify the flesh with its lusts, and mortify my members, which are upon the earth, and so keep under my body, that my soul may be at liberty to proceed in thy holy ways, to those heavenly mansions, which CHRIST is gone before to provide for them that believe in him, obey thy commandments, and seek for thy mercy and forgiveness in and through his name JESUS CHRIST the righteous. *Amen.*

C H A P. VI.

Of PURITY and HOLINESS in CONVERSATION.

AS the invisible operation and assistance of GOD's holy spirit, by which we are disposed towards that which is good, and made able to perform it, is a fundamental doctrine of *christianity*, we must acknowledge *the absolute necessity of divine grace*; but at the same time confess our ignorance, as to the manner how that holy spirit of GOD influenceth mankind towards what is good, and enables us to perform it. *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of GOD*, John iii. 8. It is not, therefore, the manner of the operations of the holy spirit, but the *absolute necessity* of this divine assistance, which we are obliged to know and believe; and which we learn from many clear texts of scripture.

If any man love me, saith CHRIST, he will keep my words, and my father will love him, and we will come unto him; and make our abode with him, John xiv. 23. *for our body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST, which is in us; except we be reprobates*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5 Thus we are to *invite* the spirit of GOD to dwell in us; and to *prepare* ourselves for the abode of this divine guest, by loving CHRIST, and keeping his commandments; and we also are taught, that where this indwelling of the spirit is *not* found, that soul is in a reprobate state; and that the spirit of GOD does not *equally visit* all persons in all ways of life, but that we must *prepare* ourselves for his presence.

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How this is to be performed we are farther taught in that passage where it is written, GOD *resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.* Which explains the method of divine grace, with regard to the *state* and *temper* of persons; shewing that there are some dispositions, which *separate* us from the spirit of GOD, and others, which procure a larger share of his gifts and graces; particularly that *pride* extinguisheth the divine light; deprives us of GOD's spirit, and leaves us to sink under the corruption and weight of nature; and that *humility* qualifies and prepares us for larger degrees of divine grace, such as may purify and perfect our souls in all manner of holiness.

Therefore all instances of pride are to be avoided: all sorts of humility are to be practised, as a necessary preparation for divine grace, that we may be fit temples for the HOLY GHOST to dwell in.

Now seeing that we are none of CHRIST's, but reprobates, if the spirit of CHRIST be not in us: seeing we are only so far *christians*, as we are renewed by the HOLY GHOST: nothing can be more necessary to true piety, than that we form every part of our lives, with regard to this holy spirit; so as to consider all our tempers, pleasures, cares, designs and ways of life, whether they be suitable to his wisdom and heavenly guidance: for, they only are the sons of GOD, *who are led by the spirit of GOD*: but none can be said to be led by the spirit of GOD, whose actions, cares and pleasures, hopes and fears, are not guided by the motions of the HOLY GHOST.

So that we must not vainly deceive ourselves in saying, where is the harm of such *indulgences*, or such *vanities*, or idle *amusements*: but we must consider whether they are such, as are conformable to a life, that is to be directed by the HOLY GHOST? whether they will *invite* his assistance? and whether

he will delight to dwell in a body thus prepared. Designs and diversions may not be sinful in their nature : but if they are vain and foolish, they are very unsuitable to the state and condition of a *Christian*. A life of folly and vanity, and trifling designs, is no more living by the spirit of GOD, than a life of gross sin is keeping the commandments. The spirit of our religion is to be the spirit of our lives, the constant principle of all our tempers and inclinations ; for we are called by GOD to a state of *purity* and *holiness*, to act by the motions of the holy spirit, and to make no other use of ourselves, or of the world we are in, than such as is conformable to that dignity of life and state of glory, to which we are called in CHRIST JESUS.

Hence it is evident, that the *renewal* of our hearts by the spirit of GOD, consists in *new thoughts* and *new desires* ; in filling our minds with great and sublime truths, and in giving us desires and inclinations hopes and fears, cares and pleasures, suitable to them. We must, therefore, practise an *universal self-denial* : because the spirit of the world, and the spirit of our corrupt and unbelieving hearts, is in a state of contradiction to this spirit and wisdom, which is from above. We must practise all that *self-denial*, *temperance*, *abstinence*, *care* and *watchfulness*, which can any ways fit and prepare our minds to hear and receive, to comprehend and relish the instructions and doctrine, which come from the spirit of GOD.

Seeing this change of the heart and newness of life is absolutely necessary ; we must fear and avoid all irregularity of spirit, every unreasonable temper ; because it affects us in the seat of life, hurts us in our principal part, and makes us *less capable* of the graces, and *less obedient* to the motions of GOD's holy spirit. We must labour after a state of peace, satisfaction and thankfulness, free from the folly

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of vain hopes, idle fears, and false anxieties: thus our souls will be disposed to feel the joys, to rejoice in the comforts, and to advance in the graces of the HOLY GHOST.

Our conversation must be conformable to that instruction, *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth [for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh] but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers, and grieve not the holy spirit of GOD, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption, Eph. iv. 29.* This scripture shews, that we *Christians* are to govern ourselves by a conformity to the spirit of GOD: that we are not only to deny ourselves vain and foolish actions, but also idle and unedifying discourse, and to conduct ourselves in all our behaviour with such a spirit of wisdom and purity, as may make the HOLY GHOST delight to dwell in us.

“ Some persons, says a pious divine, seem to know so little of religion, that they confine it to acts of devotion, and public occasions of divine worship: they do not consider, that it consists in a *new heart* and a *new spirit*, and that acts of devotion, prayer and preaching, watchings, fastings and sacraments, are only to fill us with this *new heart and spirit*, and make it the common constant spirit of our lives every day, and in every place.” A man may be religious who is regular at public worship; but he can’t be of a religious spirit, till this spirit shall be religious at all times and in all places; till he lives and breathes by it, and thinks, speaks and acts according to its motions.

He only is the religious man, who watches and guards his spirit, and endeavours to be always in the temper of religion; who worships GOD in every place, by a purity of behaviour; who is as fearful of foolish thoughts, irregular tempers, and vain ima-

imaginations at one time, as at another ; who is as wise and heavenly at home, or in the city, or in the field, as in the house of God. For, when once religion has got possession of a man's heart, and is become, as it ought to be, his ruling temper ; it is as agreeable to such a one at all times, and in all places, to speak and act according to its directions ; as it is agreeable to an ambitious, or a proud man to act according to the motions of ambition and pride. Therefore, if we are not religious in our conversation and common temper, we are not religious in our hearts : we only have a *formal religion* at certain times and places ; and are not of a *religious spirit*.

As we are not of a religious spirit, till it becomes the spirit of our lives, and orders our conversation ; so we must carefully observe, that if our conversation be vain and foolish, it, by grieving the spirit, keeps us in a state incapable of religion. For, as we can do nothing of ourselves, nor without the spirit of God, it being our breath, our life, our light and our strength : so if we live in such a way, as *grieves* and *removes* this holy spirit from us, we are as branches broke off from the tree, and must perish in the deadness and corruption of nature. Therefore, let this prevail with us to judge rightly of the sin and danger of *vain, unedifying* and *corrupt* communication : it is not the sin of *idleness* or *negligence* : it is not the sin of a *pardonable infirmity* : it is not a little mistake in spiritual wisdom ; but it is a sin, that stands between us and the *tree* of life ; and, as it *grieves* and *seperates* the holy spirit from us, it opposes our whole happiness.

We are also to deny ourselves the use and entertainment of *corrupt, impertinent* and *unedifying* books. For, if vain and idle words are not to proceed out of our mouths, we must be under the same necessity of not letting them enter into our hearts. The

books

books, which mostly corrupt the heart, and fill it with a spirit of folly are *romances*, *plays*, books of *wit* and *humour*, and other poetical productions. And tho' the way of the world may countenance and allow such sorts of entertainment: yet this is no rule or security for our conduct; because we are no more to make the spirit of the world our guide; than we are to make the riches of the world our happiness.

If it be asked, where is the harm or sin of *reading* such books of *ribaldry* and *prophaness*, which fill the mind with extravagant thoughts, lewd intrigues, vain fictions, wanton ideas, and impure descriptions; it may with as much propriety be asked, where is the sin of *swearing* and *lying*; for it is a sin not only against this or that *particular* text; but against the *whole nature* and spirit of *christianity*. If evil, unedifying communication be forbidden in scripture; because it grieves the spirit of God: then surely the reading and attending to such books must be also forbidden, for the same reason. For, the wild rant, prophane speeches, filthy jests and impure passions, which abound in such writings, are an *evil communication* in the highest degree; and must, therefore, highly grieve and seperate the holy spirit from us. The doctrines of the scriptures are the only rule by which *Christians* are to live, and the rule, by which mankind shall hereafter be judged. Now if we will allow ourselves in the reading *prophane*, *impure* and *impertinent* books, which have every thing in them that can pervert our understandings and corrupt our hearts, it must be granted, that we act as contrary to scripture, which forbids all *unedifying discourse*, as if we indulged and pleased ourselves with *malice* and *revenge*.

If it be alledged by way of excuse, that any one reads such books only by way of *amusement*, and to divert their spirit. Let such a one recollect
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the weakness of this excuse, which amounts to this; a liberty to entertain the mind with evil thoughts: to read, relish and digest the lewdness, prophane and impurity of those books: without a serious design of making himself lewd, prophane and impure, but only, as in jest, and to reap a little pleasure from them: for this is as much as to allow, that a man, who now and then gets *drunk, swears and rants*, commits no sin by so doing, because he is for the most part very sober; and that even when he runs into that excess of intemperance, it is not thro' any desire or liking of the sin of drunkenness, but only as it were in jest, and thro' the mere gaiety of his spirits, which no body can admit to be a reasonable excuse.

Neither is it any excuse to alledge, that any one reads these books only now and then, to divert the spirits; but that he mostly reads good books. For this carries its own conviction. For, here it is acknowledged that plays, romances, &c. are vain and corrupting, and naturally produce effects contrary to good books. But, what admits of no excuse is, that a *Christian* cannot allot any proper time for him to read and meditate upon lewd, prophane and impure books. There is a proper time for every thing that is lawful to be done. But if we examine into the different times or states of our minds, we can't find a time for such bad purposes.

The time for reading, or hearing, or meditating upon these books can't be when our hearts are lifted up to God; when we feel the spirit operating together with our spirit, and when we enjoy that peace, which passeth all understanding. Neither can it be the time, when either thro' neglect of duty, remorse of conscience, worldly vexations, bodily tempers, or the absence of the divine spirit, we sink into dejection and dulness, grow burthenfome to ourselves, and can hardly think of any thing with

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satisfaction : for according to sound reason, such a time is the most improper for lewd, prophane, impure, or even trifling entertainments. Because if there be any time more proper than another to think upon GOD, and to exercise religion, it is when the soul is heavy and dejected. It is not more the sole property of light to dispel darkness, than it is the sole property of religion to relieve all uneasiness. Therefore, says the apostle, *Is any one sick let him pray.* Which is not only good advice how to employ our time under affliction ; but it is a strict command, that leaves us no choice of doing any thing instead of it. It is as absolute a command, as if he had said, *Hath any one sinned, let him repent.* For an application to GOD, is as much the one thing to be done in the time of trouble, as repentance is the one thing to be done in the time of sin, Our blessed JESUS hath also settled this point, where we are to find relief in time of trouble. *Be of good comfort,* says he, *I have overcome the world.* He, therefore, who wants comfort, and seeks it in any thing else, but in the redemption wrought by CHRIST in his conquest over the world, is no more a *real christian*, than the person, that does not believe in CHRIST our Saviour.

It is a vain imagination to think we have *spare time.* For there is no time, for which we are not accountable to GOD ; who has left no time at our own disposal, to be sacrificed to the indulgence of vain tempers, and the corruption of the heart. A *Christian* has no *spare time*; except it be from this or that *labour or necessity*: he may abate, or change any particular godly exercise ; he may leave off this or that way of life ; he may take this or that refreshment : he has all these *spare times* from particular actions ; but he has no *spare time*, that releases him from the laws of *christianity*, or that leaves him at liberty not to act by the principles of religion and piety.

piety. So that, tho' there is a *spare time* to recreate and refresh ourselves, that time must be governed by the same principles of religious wisdom, as the time that is spent in cares and labours. For, our recreations and pleasures are only lawful, so far as they are directed by such wisdom and piety, as is to direct us in other parts of our worldly conduct. Therefore, if providence has placed any one above the necessity of labouring for a livelihood, he must not imagine, that he has so much *spare time* to spend, in such a manner as he pleaseth, but that he is called as certainly to some *other exercise* or *labour*, as others are called to labour for their *bread*. They that are doomed to hard labour and slavery, have it not in their power to chuse any other way of life; and therefore their labour becomes an acceptable service to God, because it is such as their state requires. But they, who have no incumbrances of life to prevent their doing the *best things*, and are at liberty to chuse the *best ways of life*; to study all the arts of *self-improvement*; to practise all the ways of doing good; and to spend their time in all the noblest instances of piety, charity, humility and devotion; must take care not to abuse the goodness of God, by misapplying the leisure and worldly happiness bestowed upon them; but that they employ their spare time in the best ways that they can find; that whilst others are oppressed with burthens, and worn out in slavery, they have time and leisure, and retirement, to think and meditate upon the greatest and best things, to enlighten the mind, to correct the disorders of the heart, to study the laws of God, to contemplate the wonders of his providence, to discover the vanity and folly of the world, and to comfort and delight the soul, with those great and glorious things, which God has prepared for those, that love him.—This is the hap-

happinefs of being free from labour and want ; not to have *ſpare time* to ſquander away in *vanity* and *impertinence* ; but to have *ſpare time* to ſpend in the ſtudy of wiſdom, in the exerciſe of faith and devotion, in the practice of piety, in all the ways and means of doing good, and exalting our ſouls to a ſtate of evangelical perfection ; in which duties it is the grand intention of this book to aſſiſt the devout and pious reader.

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PRIVATE
DEVOTIONS
FOR THE USE OF
FAMILIES and particular PERSONS
IN THE
Morning, Evening, and on several Occasions,
SUITED TO
The FEASTS and FASTS of the CHURCH,
And to various Circumstances of Life:
AND
For such as receive the HOLY SACRAMENT
OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER.

Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.

L O N D O N :

Printed for EDWARD DILLY, in the *Prultry*.
M DCC LXIII.



PRIVATE
DEVOTIONS

FOR THE USE OF
FAMILIES and particular PERSONS.

Directions and Prayers for Morning.

DIRECTIONS.

BEING thoroughly awake, endeavour to keep your mind clear of worldly thoughts, till you have presented unto the Lord the first fruits of your lips, and your heart, in the following manner.

EJACULATIONS.

LORD, when I awake, I am present with thee.
Blessed be the name of the Lord of all mercies,
who has brought me safe to the beginning of this day.

I will rejoice and be glad therein, and walk in the ways of his commandments.

DIRECTIONS.

When you have quitted your bed, and are putting on your cloaths, remember that we came not into this world to do our own will, but the will of our heavenly father: so neither are we to dress ourselves for any other end, than GOD hath appointed our cloathing, which is for modesty and health, and to preserve respect to those in high rank; and while you dress, say this

EJACULATION.

O GOD, my creator, clothe me with humility:
gird my loins with truth: give me the breast-
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plate of righteousness : shoo me with the preparation of the gospel of peace : defend me with the shield of faith : crown my head with the helmet of salvation, and protect me with the whole armour of GOD, and the sword of the Spirit ; which is the word of GOD ; that I may be able to withstand the evils of this day, and, having done all, to stand, *Eph. vi. 13—17.*

Then kneel down, and say,

O *Most gracious GOD, assist me with thy grace, in all my supplications and prayers, and dispose my words and actions towards the attainment of everlasting salvation ; that amongst all the changes, chances and temptations of this mortal life, I may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help, thro' JESUS CHRIST my Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

DIRECTIONS.

Being dressed and washed, and if you be single, retire to some private place, and with great humility lift up your heart to GOD in prayer : for we ought no more to forget our daily devotion, than our daily bread. And if you have a family, call them together, and by prayer commend your own and their affairs to the blessing of that GOD, whose care is over all his creatures ; and without whose blessing we can do no manner of good.

Morning Prayer for a private or single Person.

O Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one GOD : have mercy upon me a miserable sinner.

My voice shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord, early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and look up.

O hearken thou unto the voice of my calling, my King, and my GOD ; for unto thee will I make my prayer.

O Lord our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting GOD, who hast safely brought me to the
begin-

beginning of this day ; defend me in the same with thy mighty power ; and grant that this day I fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger ; but that all my doings may be ordered by thy governance to do always that which is righteous in thy sight, thro' JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

ALmighty and most merciful Father, who knowest my down-lying and up-rising, and art acquainted with all my ways : thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with approbation : it is of thy infinite mercy, that instead of praying unto thee, and praising of thee, I am not blaspheming thy name in endless torments. For I am of the degenerated posterity of our first parents, and have daily broken thy laws and commandments, which are all holy, just and good. O remember not against me what I have done against thee, but what thy Son hath done and suffered for me, and accept of me in him to the praise of thy grace. Work a thorough change in my whole soul ; enlighten my dark understanding, that I may savingly know thee ; spiritualize my affections, that I may love thee ; bow and incline my will wholly to submit unto thee ; reform my life, that I may serve thee, and be saved by thee. Cleanse me from my secret sins, and let no presumptuous sins have dominion over me. Wean me from the world ; let my heart, my treasure, my conversation be in heaven. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, that I offend not with my tongue : let me delight in that which is good, eschew and abhor that which is evil ; set me always before thee, that I may not dare to sin against thee. Make me peaceable and contented in myself, useful and beneficial to others, well-pleasing and acceptable unto thee. Mind me frequently of my latter end ; while I live let me

live unto thee, when I die let me die unto thee,
living and dying let me bethine; thro' JESUS CHRIST.
Amen.

The INTERCESSION.

BE very merciful to all mankind, especially those that are called Christians: inlarge and bless thy holy catholic church with more abundant peace, purity, and concord. Pardon the crying sins of these three nations; let us search and try our ways, and turn unto thee our GOD; make us a people peculiar to thyself, zealous in faith, and of good works. Bless our sovereign, with all our magistrates and ministers; let them discharge their duty as those that must give an account. Be with me this day, and all my days; where-ever I am, and whatsoever I am doing, let me awfully remember, that GOD made me, GOD preserves me, GOD redeemed me, GOD sees me, and GOD will judge me. Never leave me nor forsake me. Guide and direct me by thy counsel; assist me by thy Holy Spirit; prosper me in all my ways, and at last receive me unto glory, thro' JESUS CHRIST, in whose holy name and words I further pray. *Our Father, &c.*

The concluding PRAYER.

THE Lord fulfil the desires and petitions of thy servant, as may be most expedient for me; the Lord bless and keep me, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon me, and give me peace, both now and ever. *Amen.*

Morning Prayer for a Family.

O GOD, everlasting father, creator and preserver of all mankind, whose mercy is over all thy works, and of whose blessings and mercies there is no end; we thy most humble servants prostrate before thee, want words to express our thanks and praise

praise for the least of thy benefits bestowed upon us; nor durst we presume to approach thy divine majesty with words of human invention, had not thy dear Son assured us that our prayers in his name would be acceptable in thy sight; we therefore truly sensible of our own infirmities and unworthiness, praise thee for breathing into us immortal spirits, and advancing us to a pitch of being, which makes us capable of looking up to thee the great author of it; by which we obtain the high privilege of acknowledging the bounty we experience; of praising, loving, and resembling thy wisdom and goodness, O bright original of all perfection! Never can we sufficiently admire the unsearchable riches of that love which gave the blessed JESUS to die for sins not his own. In him thy grace hath so exceedingly abounded, as not only to surpass our deserts, but to be utterly incommensurate to the widest grasp of humane desire. And therefore above all, we bless thee for the gracious declaration of thy good will made to us in our Saviour; by whom thou invitest the return of sinners, and directest them in the way of life. We thank thee most gracious father, that we clearly perceive the way to happiness in his doctrine and example; and are furnished with means to attain it by the Spirit he *hath shed abroad in our hearts*. For his sake alone we hope for a favourable acceptance of these our addresses; as well knowing that nothing under infinite goodness would vouchsafe any regard to what is done by unprofitable servants; much less to us, of all others the most unprofitable, the most unworthy.

For we are ashamed, O God, to reflect upon our great forgetfulness of these things, and our ingratitude to thee, to whom is owing all we enjoy in this world, or can wish for in a better. Our hope standeth only in thy compassions, procured by the intercession of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST. And accordingly under the covert of his merits, we

humbly approach thee, imploring thy tender mercies in the forgiveness of our sins. We are truly sorrowful that we should ever incur the guilt of a breach of laws that are *holy, just and good*, and which in all respects it is our interest as well as duty to keep inviolable. Accept our sorrow, and pardon our manifold neglects and omissions; our slight and careless performance of the duties of religion without a due attention of mind.

Forgive our not having always served thee with a perfectly reasonable service, but often out of fashion or custom: without that purity of intention, sincerity of heart; that fervency of spirit; that zeal for thy glory; that care, and diligence, and constancy which we ought, and which our words pretended. Pass by all offences committed through ignorance or weakness; all sins of incursion or surprise; all irregular, inordinate desires and affections; but especially our known and chosen transgressions; for JESUS CHRIST his sake. We utterly renounce them all, and whatsoever is contrary to thy will; and we devote ourselves to the obedience thereof. Accept, O most merciful father, of the renewed dedication we make of our whole man, body, soul, and spirit unto thee. Favour these our holy purposes by thy grace, and assist us in the recovery of such a lively image of thee our God in all righteousness, mercy, and faithfulness, that we may know thy love abideth in us. O that JESUS, the hope of glory, may be formed in us in all humility, meekness, charity, patience, and the absolute surrender of ourselves to thy good pleasure! O that the life we lead in the flesh may be that of him, *who went about doing good*! Do thou, O Lord, keep it ever in the purpose of our hearts to please thee for the future, and keep thy commandments always for our good. Write them in our minds, and put thy fear in our inward parts, that we never again fall from thee. Teach us, we beseech

seech thee, seriously to consider, that *we came into this world, not to do our own will, but the will of him that sent us*: that we are no farther Christians, than as we give all diligence to perform our master's will, and sincerely obey that gospel we pretend to believe. Teach us duly to consider what the special nature, employment, and satisfaction of reasonable agents is; and affect us deeply with the important design for which we live; that so, always looking upon our life as a state of probation, we may readily transfer all expectations of true satisfaction to that which is to come. We also praise thee, as for the sacrifice of CHRIST, so also for the descent of the HOLY GHOST, which enabled the apostles to preach the glad tidings of salvation throughout the world; and to transmit to us of these latter ages, in safety and purity, thy word, the great charter of eternal life: the guide and comforter of our pilgrimage.

And, blessed be thy name that thou hast trained us up in thy true religion, and made us members of that holy church which is knit together and enlivened by thy inspiration, O blessed Spirit and *Power* of the most high GOD: that thou hast given us opportunity to know that love of thine which *passeth knowledge*: that we have been touched with the folly and misery of our sins: and that we have made strong resolutions of conforming ourselves to thy laws for the time to come. Awaken our minds, we pray thee, to frequent and serious reflections upon these very distinguishing favours; and keep alive such a powerful sense in us of thy presence and the love of CHRIST; that we may fear, and trust in, and cheerfully obey thee: study thy approbation chiefly, and account it for happiness and perfection to be like unto thy blessed self. To this end let thy Spirit bear us up continually above all temptation by the vigour of our faith, the powers of love, and holy hope; that no appetite of pleasure, no desire of false glory, may

be so far indulged, as thereby to gain strength to withdraw us from our allegiance. Help us to be discreet in ordering our affairs : useful in every state and relation : observant of thy fatherly providence in what befalls us ; and ever prepared, ever willing to die, when, and as to thee shall seem good. Make us highly sensible of the frailty, shortness, and uncertainty of this life, and the importance of that which is immortal. Make us, under these impressions careful so to lead our lives, as we now clearly perceive we ought, and as we shall earnestly wish we had done, when we come to die ; that this consideration may dispose us to *make haste, and not delay to keep thy commandments* ; nor any longer put off that great work, which can never too soon be undertaken. O let the remembrance of our putting off this earthly tabernacle at no time forsake our spirit : never cease to influence our actions ; and grant, that when we shall be gathered to our fathers, we may be found in perfect reconciliation with thy nature and will, and may be able to lift up our heads with joy before thee, O GOD, of the spirits of all flesh ; well knowing that our redemption from sin and misery is fulfilled ; and that we shall be for ever and ever, world without end, partakers of the manifestations of thy glory in beatitude ineffable, inconceivable.

And, that we may always approach thee with delight, be thou Lord our helper. Let us feel it the joy of our hearts to think of thee, praise, adore, and give thanks unto thee. Fix in our souls an habitual, pure intention of thy glory in whatever we do. Give us to submit willingly to thy visitations, as the remedy of our souls, and the discipline of a benefactor.

And now that thou hast pleased to bring us safely to the beginning of this day, for which also we laud and magnify thy goodness : vouchsafe, O Lord, to continue the blessing by the defence of thine almighty

mighty power; and grant, that neither the example, or solicitations of the wicked, nor the distraction of our own affairs, nor the allurements of sinful desire, may either retard our spiritual progress, or draw us into the commission of sin. Keep us all, O thou preserver of men, this day, under a lasting conviction of thine universal knowledge. Let this truth dwell in our mind; that thou, our king and our God, art ever intimately and immediately present with us; that darkness and retirement are no covering from thy sight; that thou never ceaseft day or night to behold our actions; that the least, and most inconsiderable of them is not hid from thine all-seeing eye; that thou hearknest to the secret whispers of our heart; that thou notest in thy book of remembrance our words and deeds, omissions and purposes; even those that expired in meer intention, and wilt for them bring us into judgment. O may the issues of the day of recompence, the day that is coming upon all flesh, be ever sounding in our ears, and alarming our security and negligence; may the expectation of it keep us upright in heart and mind; render our whole conversation temperate, and make us diligent to embrace all opportunities of doing good. We intreat thy blessing upon us in the work thy providence hath assigned; grant that we may so behave ourselves therein, that we bring not upon us at night the remembrance of an evil conscience.

The INTERCESSION.

BLESS, preserve, and defend the holy catholic church: and, in great mercy to the church of these nations, bless our Sovereign Lord King *George*: Our gracious Queen *Charlotte*: his Royal Highness *George* Prince of *Wales*: the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Royal family. Give unto the King, health, long life, and prosperity. Bless him in his officers of state and justice; and grant to

every of them a public spirit ; that without too quick a sense of their own interest, or that of the party they espouse, they may well discharge the several trusts reposed in them, to thy glory, and the good of thy people.

Pour thy blessing upon our spiritual pastors, and succeed their labours. Give us all grace to follow their admonitions, and to esteem them highly for their works sake. Remove out of the church all corruption, offence, and divisions, all tyranny and usurpation over the consciences of men ; that those who profess the same faith, may treat each other as heirs of the same salvation. Bless our brethren of the Reformed churches, and those also who unhappily separate from us ; however distant and irreconcilable our opinions and external communion may be, yet do thou, the G O D of peace and order, unite us in the bond of charity and holiness.

Bless, O Lord, we pray thee of thy goodness, all universities, those of this land especially. Preserve in all the members of those bodies a teachable temper, and minds always open to evidence, from what quarter soever it may happen to come. Let no man's reverence make them to fall. Keep them unwearied in the pursuit and improvement of science, and grant they may neither be rash to admit or propagate error ; carnal, to dissemble their convictions, or to *hold the truth in unrighteousness*. Assist their endeavours to put a stop to that spirit of deism, fatality, false worship and superstition, immorality and profaneness : to that hypocrisy and *form of godliness, without the power thereof*, which is gone out among us on whom thy name is called. Be pleased to pity those, who pity not themselves : to give unrepenting, ignorant, careless and obstinate sinners, a prospect of their danger. Let Israel according to the flesh acknowledge him whom they have pierced ; and let the fulness of the gentiles glorify thee. Be merciful,

ful, O GOD, the GOD of all consolation, to those who are in distress; to whom the adversary suggests despair; to those who labour under poverty, sickness, captivity, persecution. Sanctify their several afflictions to them; affording them what thou knowest the most effectual to promote their temporal or spiritual welfare. Increase their faith and virtue here to the enlargement of their happiness hereafter.

Extend thy goodness to all our friends, benefactors, and all those concerned in our education or spiritual attainments; recompence to them all their kindness to us an hundred-fold. Grant they may in this manner lift up their souls to thee, and teach those who come after them to love, honour, and obey thee. And grant us a portion in all the good prayers, either by them, or any others offered up in our behalf; and make both them and us partakers of the intercession of thy beloved Son, and the groans of the Holy Spirit. Pardon all our enemies and turn their hearts, and help us to overcome their evil with good.

O Lord our governor, we beseech thee, for JESUS CHRIST his sake, favourably to look upon these holy desires, wherewith our souls under the pressure of this mortal body, aspire towards thee: accept, encourage, and preserve them; make them restless and importunate, till they shall receive their final accomplishment in the regions of eternal bliss. Amen.

DIRECTIONS.

Then, if time will permit, read and meditate upon some portion of scripture: and in doing this, take care not to confine your reading to the moral duties contained in the sacred books; because such a partiality may induce a supposition that the christian does enough, when by his own strength he endeavours to live up to the same.—This, GOD knows, is too much the mistake of many, otherwise sincere christians, and

has contributed too much to lessen the great end, and is a dangerous method of reading the word of GOD; by which we are taught, that the way to ETERNAL LIFE is thro' FAITH in CHRIST alone. Whereas, the reader, who is content with the moral parts of scripture, or risks his salvation on any passages, that treat only of moral duties, can never hope to gain a true insight into the fall of man, and his redemption by JESUS CHRIST. For, as such a one can attain to no more than a slight knowledge of the various diseases of a man's soul; it can't be supposed, he will ever imbibe any regard for JESUS CHRIST, the great physician of the soul, and restorer of nature. He is apt to think that a little good education and conversation is all required to form a good man. The whole of his religion is adapted to the fashion of the world: and as he squares his actions by a set of shining moralities, and refrains from the gross and visible pollutions of the world; so he will be apt to raise his own esteem on the wileness of those, who openly wallow in the mire of corruption.—The only remedy for this mistake, is to consider that the scripture was given to man, not so much to make us externally good and sober, which might be done by the law delivered by Moses; but to make us BELIEVE, that JESUS is the CHRIST the Son of GOD; and that believing, we might have life thro' his name, John xx. 21. and at all times prepare yourself for this exercise in some such form, as here followeth.

A Prayer before reading the Scripture.

ASSIST me, O Lord, with thy wisdom, and grace, that I may look upon the sacred books of thy will, to be communicated to me by thy divine Spirit, for a lantern unto my feet, a light unto my paths, and a sword for my defence, with the shield of faith, against temptation, sin, vice and infidelity: and grant me so to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that I may discover the weakness and sinfulness of my own nature, and rely on the blessed hope of everlasting life, thro' the merits of thy Son JESUS CHRIST, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

EJACU-

EJACULATIONS.

To be used occasionally in reading the scripture.

LORD incline my heart to keep this law !
Lord deliver me from this judgment, sin, or temptation !

Lord, vouchsafe to make my calling and elections sure !

Glory be thee, O Lord ! for this mercy !

Directions and Prayers for Evening.

DIRECTIONS.

Before you go to bed, allot some short time for prayer, that you may close the day with the same religious temper and devotion, as you entered upon it in the morning.

EJACULATIONS.

O Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one GOD : have mercy upon me a miserable sinner.

Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight, as the incense ; and the lifting up of my hands, be an evening sacrifice.

A Preparatory PRAYER.

PRevent me, O Lord, in all my doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further me with thy continual help, that in all my works begun, continued, and ended in thee, I may glorify thy holy name, and finally by thy mercy obtain everlasting life, thro' JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

An Evening Prayer for a single or private Person.

MOST holy and ever blessed Lord GOD. Thou hast commanded me to pray, and so it is my
great

great duty : and hast filed thyself a GOD, hearing prayers, and so it is my great privilege. In obedience to thy command, and in confidence of thy promises, I desire in all humility and holy confidence, to wait upon thee at this time, in and thro' my Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST ; for his sake beseeching thee for mercy and grace ; mercy for the pardon of my sins, without which I am of all creatures most miserable ; and grace for the sanctifying of my nature, and amendment of my life. Search me, O Lord, and try me, and whatsoever is displeasing in me unto thee, remove it thence, and lead me in the way everlasting. Let me value and mind the things that are not seen, more than the things that are seen ; because the things that are seen are temporal, and those that are not seen are eternal. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to any evil way. Let not the pleasures nor troubles of this world, allure or hinder me from serving thee with chearfulness and delight. Prepare me for every condition, for every change, especially for my great and last change. Give me grace so to live, that I may be neither ashamed to live, nor afraid, nor unfit to die ; then, when thou shalt call me hence, thou may'st receive me unto eternal enjoyment of thyself in heaven. Be very gracious and merciful to all mankind, to all Jews, Turks, Pagans, and Infidels ; bring them to the knowledge and obedience of the truth. Bless, prosper and protect thy church, and every member of it ; be with it unto the end of the world, and let not the gates of hell prevail against it. Reform whatsoever thou seest amiss in the belief and lives of Christians ; especially in these three nations ; continue unto us peace, with the gospel of peace for thy name sake. Bless our Sovereign, and all in authority, with holiness here, and happiness hereafter ; let all his subjects live under him quiet and
peace-

peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty. Let the ministers of thy gospel preach both by their lives and doctrine, and daily turn many unto righteousness. Let none of my relations be strangers unto thyself, nor any of thine afflicted servants be forgotten by thee. Relieve them according to their several necessities, and the riches of thy grace in thy Son. I praise thee for what thou hast afforded me, thy good creatures, thy blessing with them, thy provision for me, and preservation of me this day, and all my days: let me lie down, and take my rest and sleep, because thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety. Whether I sleep or wake, live or die, let me be found thine own, to thy eternal glory, and my everlasting salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, who hath taught me when I pray to say,

Our Father which art in heaven, &c.

An Evening-Prayer for a Family.

O Eternal God, in whom we live, move, and have our being, thou makest day and night to succeed each other, for the comfort and refreshment of mankind; we yield thee thanks and praise for our protection and preservation this day, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine infinite love to us, in thy dear Son JESUS CHRIST, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.

O Lord, be pleased to add one blessing more to us, the blessing of a thankful and obedient heart, that we may henceforth live to thy honour and glory, and shew forth thy praise all the days of our life.

O gracious Father, do thou mercifully pardon and forgive all the sins and offences of our lives past; but especially, whatever thou hast seen amiss in any of us this day, in thought, word or deed.

Let

Let none of our sins be ever laid to our charge, to shame us in this world, or to condemn us in the world to come; but let us have redemption through the blood of JESUS, even the remission of all our transgressions; for the blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin: and now, O Lord, we commend ourselves, and all our relations and friends, unto thy blessed protection this night; beseeching thee to preserve us from fire, robbery, terrors of evil angels, or any other fear or peril, which for our sins we have most justly deserved.

Let our sleep be sweet and refreshing to our bodies, and we the better able to serve thee, in our several places the day following.

Good Lord, hear our prayers, and grant our requests, and whatever else thou knowest to be good and necessary for us. Conduct us safely, through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, and when thou takest us hence, receive us into thy heavenly kingdom; through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, in whose blessed name and words, we farther call upon thee, saying,

Our Father which art in heaven, &c.

DIRECTIONS.

Let every one, in his own heart, consider that GOD is infinite in majesty, power and justice, and that man by nature, is base, weak, and corrupt: which will convince him of the necessity every one lies under, to examine his conscience, and to apply unto GOD, thro' the mediation of JESUS CHRIST, by confession and sincere repentance; for mercy and forgiveness of sins. Therefore the following form may serve to assist the devout Christian in the practice of so necessary an exercise, both in the morning and evening, to be added to the other prayers.

A Prayer for Repentance and godly Sorrow or Contrition.

O Most glorious Lord GOD, let thine ears I pray thee be open to the prayer of thine unworthy servant. O do thou create in us a new, and a contrite heart; wound us with deep compunction, and represent unto us effectually, the folly and baseness, as well as the guilt, and just desert of our actions; that we, looking on him whom our sins have pierced, may with holy resentment duly mourn against them, which caused his sufferings, and seek our condemnation, that we may be filled with indignation against ourselves, who have ungratefully offended a GOD so gracious.

Give us, I beseech thee, such a deep sense of our wickedness, that our repentance may bear some proportion to our transgressions; that we, worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, O GOD of all mercies, perfect remission and forgiveness.

O do thou impress on our hearts so tender a sense of thy sufferings for us, that we may feel all the sorrows of thy beloved son, and suffer with him, throughout every period of his passion: and that thy blessed spirit may either work in us that degree of godly contrition, which thou hast promised not to despise; or supply the defects of it by his groans, which cannot be uttered. Hear us, and help us, and have mercy upon us, O Lord GOD of our salvation; thro' JESUS CHRIST, our Saviour. *Amen.*

Or this.

A Almighty and most merciful Father, I humbly intreat thee to open my understanding by the light of thy holy Spirit; that I may gain a true knowledge of my sins; that I may see them all, in their proper deformity, with every evil circumstance belong-

belonging to them. The experience I have had of my own deceitful nature, obliges me to press this petition with earnestness. For, I confess, O God, that my passions very often are so prevailing, that they blind my understanding.

Afford me then, O Lord, the benefit of thy light and thy truth; bring to my sight all my iniquities; and let no sort of passion put a semblance of innocence upon them. I resign the whole concern of my soul into thy hands, without any reserve, most humbly beseeching thee, to do with me whatever thou see'st necessary to my cure. Let me not deceive myself, with any false, insufficient, or counterfeit sorrow; but grant me such a sincere contrition, as may prevail with thee for my forgiveness. Look upon me in much pity, and so strengthen me by thy good spirit, that as often as I shall profess to repent of my sins, that profession may be so very much the genuine issue of the heart, that I may forthwith renounce every evil way, and take such methods as may prove effectual against all relapses, and restore me to thy peace.

Let me always remember, that true contrition is thy gift; and let thy grace excite, and make me both earnest in asking, and solicitous to obtain it. Suffer not, I beseech thee, sloth, or pretended business to make me omit this necessary duty, or too much contract my leisure, and shorten the time in which I am to perform it. Grant, that my heart may be powerfully moved with most earnest desires of obtaining a true contrition and full conversion, from thee the author of all good. Suffer me upon no account to add negligence to those offences I undertake to repent of; but let such a real abhorrence of them possess me, that I may hate them as hateful to thee, and fly them as the enemies of my salvation. To this end, let me remember, that all is to be given for heaven; and that, if there be any thing

thing I cannot forsake in order to continue thy faithful servant; it is an evident token, my humiliations, confession and repentance are all deceit.

O let thy powerful grace prevent in me this great abomination: let my dependance be entirely on thee, who alone art able to accomplish it. Give me therefore, I humbly beseech thee, that christian resolution, which will neither be weary, nor discouraged with difficulties; give me that true perseverance that I may pursue my cause whatever I thereby suffer. In mercy do thou vouchsafe to lay my whole duty before me, and give me a full view of all the obligations that are to be satisfied, as the necessary conditions of a sincere repentance, and to crown the whole; grant me such powers as are needful for enabling me to do as I know; direct me especially in this way of seeking thee, that, never admitting any false hopes of pardon, I may be chiefly solicitous of faithfulness in thy law, and upon that condition expect forgiveness. Suffer me not any more to put off what is my duty at present, upon the uncertainty of what is to come; since that may never arrive, and if it does, I may be then through thy just judgment still more inclined to prolong it. Let me give proof of my conversion, by thorough change of life, and a desire of making recompense for all the injuries done by me to any other, in thought, word and deed.

And pardon me, I beseech thee, for the many times I have hitherto abused thy mercy, in pretending to repent without actual amendment; and this for the sake of thine only Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

*A Form of SELF-EXAMINATION.
Concerning FAITH.*

DO I believe in GOD the Father, and place my whole dependance on him?

Do I believe in, and resign myself wholly to his will, revealed in the holy scriptures?

Do I esteem GOD, and prefer him in all my thoughts, words and actions, above all things?

Do I thoroughly detest all worship of the creature?

Do I stedfastly believe that GOD has an only son, that was made man?

Do I believe that this son was GOD from all eternity, and died for the sins of mankind in his human nature?

Do I sincerely believe that the ransom he paid to divine justice for the sins of the whole world, was sufficient to open heaven gates for all men?

Do I heartily believe that there is no salvation for man, but through the righteousness and sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST?

Do I believe that CHRIST's righteousness is imputed to all believers?

Do I believe that he is our only mediator, and will come to judge the world at the last day?

Do I believe that there is a holy spirit, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son?

Do I believe that this spirit is sent to lighten, to comfort, to strengthen, and to guide the regenerate into the way of all truth?

Do I believe that a man must be born of this spirit, before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven?

Do I believe that a man can do no good thing without this spirit, operating together with his spirit?

Do I sincerely seek for sanctification thro' the HOLY GHOST, as I do for justification and redemption thro' JESUS CHRIST?

Do I, without wavering, believe in the holy and undivided Trinity or three persons, Father, Son, and HOLY GHOST, in the Godhead, and that those THREE are only ONE GOD?

Having

Having asked yourself these questions, and finding yourself to have been unbelieving or doubtful, or wavering, in regard to any of them, stop at that particular question, and with all humility confess your unbelief, and say, Pardon me, good Lord! and encrease my faith. At those questions, which you sincerely believe, say, Give me grace to live and die in this faith. Then proceed thus,

Concerning WORKS.

HAVE I by swearing, cursing, blasphemy, perjury, or any other way or means taken God's name in vain, dishonoured him, or caused others so to do?

Have I profaned the *Lord's-day*, by servile work, neglect of God's worship, or by recreations, diversions, and unholy entertainments and employments, or caused others so to do?

Have I been disobedient to, or despised, or neglected those to whom nature or providence has placed me in subordination, whether father, mother, master, mistress, or guardian? Or have I in my station of life, done my duty to those, whom God and his good providence has committed to my care and charge?

Have I wounded, maimed, murdered, or challenged any person to fight?

Have I born malice, or entertained deliberate thoughts or desires of revenge?

Have I used opprobrious language to hurt any person?

Have I invented falsehoods and scandal, or spread and encouraged false reports?

Do I live in a state of enmity with any person, thro' my own fault?

Have I caused or solicited any other to kill, or otherwise to hurt my neighbour in his person or reputation?

Have I been cruel or unmerciful towards any creature?

Have

Have I refused or neglected to assist the distressed, when called upon, and in my power?

Have I turned my face from the poor and needy, and not relieved them according to my ability?

Have I abused or misused God's creatures, by intemperance, or excess in eating or drinking, or by drunkenness and gluttony? by extravagant living, or feasting, dressing, and spending beyond my fortune or estate? or, by forcing or enticing others so to do?

Have I taken any thing to shorten my life, or entertained any thoughts of destroying myself, before my appointed time shall come?

Have I in thought, word or deed committed adultery?

Have I delighted in impure thoughts? in immodest discourse, songs and books? in unchaste embraces, and other actions tending to enflame lustful desires?

Have I enticed, solicited or drawn others to acts of impurity?

Have I stolen other people's goods? or retained by violence what was not my own property? or received stolen goods? or encouraged, or connived at theft?

Have I defrauded, attempted to over-reach, or taken advantage of another's ignorance, weakness, or oversight in bargains, sale, traffic or commerce?

Have I been guilty of the sin of simony? or assisted others in that offence?

Have I given a false evidence before a magistrate, or in a court of justice? or suborned any one so to do?

Have I told lies, or betrayed the secrets of another to his prejudice?

Have I presumed too much on the goodness and forbearing of GOD? or, have I despaired of his mercy?

DIREC-

DIRECTIONS.

As you ask yourself these questions, and your conscience pronounce you guilty of the sin, say, Pardon me, good Lord! and grant me thy grace, that I may never more offend thee in like manner. And having thus finished the examination by the light of your conscience, and the word of GOD, confess your guilt unto the GOD of all mercy, and intercede for pardon in the manner following, saying I instead of we, when used by a private or single person.

The Confession.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful father; we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O GOD, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent; according to thy promises declared unto mankind in CHRIST JESUS our Lord. And grant, O merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life. To the glory of thy holy name. *Amen.*

Then add the following Prayer, changing we into I, and us into me, when used by a single person.

A Prayer for Pardon.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee the GOD of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

The

The concluding Prayer.

UNTO thy mercy and protection, O God, I commit myself this night and evermore. O Lord, bless and keep me, and all belonging to me: Lord make thy face shine upon me, and be gracious unto me, Lord lift up thy countenance upon me, and give me peace now and for evermore. *Amen.*

EJACULATIONS at going to bed.

VOuchsafe, O Lord, to keep me this night without sin.

Give me grace to put off the old man with his deeds.

In the name of JESUS CHRIST crucified, I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest.

Into thy hands I commend my spirit; lighten mine eyes, O Lord, that I sleep not in death.

Live JESUS, live, and let it be
My life to die for love of Thee.

Occasional Prayers.

Which may be added to any of the former DEVOTIONS.

A Prayer on CHRISTMAS Day.

ALmighty GOD, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy holy spirit, through the same our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the same spirit, ever one GOD, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer on NEW-YEARS Day.

ALmighty GOD, who made thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man;

man; grant us the true circumcision of the spirit, that our hearts and all our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will, through the same thy Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer on TWELFTH-DAY, being the Manifestation of CHRIST to the Gentiles.

O GOD, who by the leading of a star, didst manifest thy only begotten Son to the *Gentiles*; mercifully grant, that we, which know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer on ASH-WEDNESDAY, the first Day of LENT.

GIVE me grace, O Lord, to use such abstinence, that my flesh may be subdued to the spirit; teach me to use this act of discipline so, that it may become an act of religion, and be a means of improving me in all piety, and holiness, and virtue. Forgive all my frailties and imperfections, and be not strict to mark what I have done, or shall do amiss, but deal with me according to thy mercy and loving kindness, and accept my imperfect service, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, our blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer on GOOD-FRIDAY.

I Adore thee, O blessed JESUS, I acknowledge thee to be the Son of GOD most high; I behold thy glory shining through the blackest clouds of thy shameful sufferings. Then thou appearedst to be the chosen of GOD, even when thou wast scorned and rejected of men. Great was the splendor of thy majesty, under the mockery of a crown of thorns, and under the reproach of the cross itself.

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And

And great was thy love, O thou lover of souls, who wouldst shed thy own most precious blood, to work and confirm thy faith in our hearts, that believing on thee, we might have life through thy name. How infinitely are we indebted to thee, who had'st so dearly purchased our eternal joy with thy most bitter sorrow.

I dread to think that thy precious blood should be lost and spilt in vain for me; that so great a prize should be cast away, wherewith thou hast bought me. O dearest Lord, preserve in me such a lively sense of thy grief and sorrow, of thy pain and anguish, that I may perfectly hate the cause of all thy torments, and look upon every sin as the most fearful curse that can befall me.

Behold, O GOD, the bleeding wounds of thy well-beloved Son; remember how his body was broken for us, and his blood poured out. O hear his dying groans, regard his agony and bloody sweat; by his cross and passion, let my sins be blotted out: I have nothing to plead, if he has not done enough, and fulfilled all thy will. But since he hath laid down his life in obedience to thee, O let me, by virtue of this voluntary sacrifice, obtain thy gracious pardon.

Fix my thoughts so constantly upon his dying love, and affect my heart so mightily therewith, that I may chearfully undergo any pains to be made like to him, in his humility, in his obedience, in his resignation of himself to thy wise will and pleasure, in his meekness, in his charity and forgiveness of his enemies, in his willingness to quit all things for thy name sake, and to trust both soul and body with thee in well-doing, and contented in suffering whatsoever it be that thou requirest of me. Now to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and made us kings and priests to GOD, even the Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.* Sen-

Sentences and Prayer on EASTER-SUNDAY.

CHRIſT our paſſover is ſacrificed for us : therefore let us keep the feaſt. Not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedneſs : but with the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth, 1 Cor. v. 8.

CHRIſT being raiſed from the dead, dieth no more : death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto ſin once : but in that he liveth, he liveth unto GOD. Likewise reckon ye alſo yourſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin : but alive unto GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, Rom. vi. 9.

CHRIſT is riſen from the dead : and become the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept. For ſince by man came death : by man came alſo the reſurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die : even ſo in CHRIST ſhall all be made alive, 1 Cor. xv. 20.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the HOLY GHOST.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever ſhall be world without end. Amen.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who through thine only begotten Son JESUS CHRIST haſt overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlaſting life ; we humbly beſeech thee, that as by thy ſpecial grace preventing us, thou doſt put into our minds good deſires, ſo by thy continual help, we may bring the ſame to good effect, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the HOLY GHOST, ever one GOD, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer on ASCENSION-DAY.

GRANT, we beſeech thee, almighty GOD, that like as we do believe thy only begotten Son our Lord

Lord JESUS CHRIST to have ascended into the heavens ; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the HOLY GHOST, one GOD, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer on WHITSUNDAY, being the Descent of the HOLY GHOST, and on the two following Days.

GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit ; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of CHRIST JESUS our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one GOD, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer on CANDLEMAS-DAY, or the Purification of the Virgin MARY, and the Presentation of CHRIST in the Temple.

Almighty and everlasting GOD, we humbly beseech thy majesty, that as thy only begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in substance of our flesh ; so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts, by the same thy Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer on LADY-DAY, or the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin MARY.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the incarnation of thy Son JESUS CHRIST by the message of an angel ; so by his cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection, through the same JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

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*A Prayer on the Feast of St. MICHAEL, and
all Angels.*

O Eternal GOD, who hast appointed thy holy angels to be ministring spirits to those that are heirs of salvation, give those blessed spirits a charge to protect and defend me from the malice of the devil, and all his evil instruments, and from all casualties and sad accidents. Give me grace to serve thee with the same diligence and chearfulness on earth, as the holy angels do in heaven : and help me also, O Lord, (as far as I am able) to join with the heavenly choir above, in praising and adoring thy excellencies and perfections, thy majesty and mercy ; and when my flesh and heart shall fail me, let thy holy angels conduct my soul unto thy heavenly kingdom, where, with cherubims and seraphims, arch-angels and angels, and all the company of heaven, I may laud and magnify thy glorious name, world without end.
Amen.

*A Prayer to be used upon the Days of the
Memory of the Apostles and Martyrs.*

O Most glorious and gracious Lord GOD, through whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in peace and rest from their labours, and their memory is blessed ; I praise and magnify thy divine majesty, for thy special grace and goodness manifested to thy apostles and martyrs, and other holy persons, who have glorified thy name in the time of their frail life upon earth. And this day we have thy servant [*Here name the particular Saint*] in remembrance, whom thou hast safely led through all the troubles and temptations of this world ; and hast now lodged with the rest of thy faithful servants, in a paradise of joy and happiness, until the restitution of all things. Teach

me, O Lord, so to practise their doctrine, and to imitate their holy examples, that I being united as a part of the same mystical body, by the bands of the same faith, holy hope, and never-failing charity, unto our head, the Lord JESUS, the author and finisher of our faith, may, in the last day, have my perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thine eternal and everlasting kingdom, through the merits of JESUS CHRIST, our Lord and only Saviour; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all praise and adoration, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be said on our Birth-Day, or Day of Baptism.

O Most blessed and gracious Lord GOD, from whom (in an especial manner) I have my being, I humbly praise thy name for thy great goodness to me this day, in causing me to be born of christian parents, and in making me a member of thy holy church by baptism, thereby preventing and engaging me to the profession and practise of thy holy religion. I also bless thee in particular, that I was born with perfect limbs and senses, and the free use of reason and understanding, without any deficiency or deformity in body or mind. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, therefore will I give thanks unto thee, as long as I have my being.

O Lord, pardon the ignorance and errors, the vanity and vices of my youth, and the greater faults of my riper years. Give me true contrition and repentance for what is past; and let thy Holy Spirit enable me to walk in newness of life for the future. Let no root of bitterness spring up in me, to interrupt my good purposes of amendment, or defile and pollute

pollute my mind and conscience with guilt ; but let the addition of my years be so many degrees of nearer approach unto thee, the GOD of my life, and fountain of happiness ; and forsake me not when I am old and grey-headed ; but when my strength faileth me, be thou my strength and my guide unto death ; and after death receive my soul to rest and peace, until the time of restitution ; and then raise me up to a life of eternal glory in thy heavenly kingdom, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord and only Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by a married Person.

O Most holy Father, who in paradise didst appoint and consecrate the conjugal state, bless us thy servants whom that holy state has joined in the sacred ties of love and duty ; teach us mutual forbearance, tendernefs and kindness to one another, and let a perfect harmony and agreement of our affections be the evidence that by that holy ordinance thou hast made us one : bless us with all temporal and spiritual blessings ; forgive all our failings and infirmities, and let a sincere and sacred love alleviate and render supportable the cares that attend that condition of life, and fit us to be ever happy with thee, the GOD of peace and love ; through JESUS CHRIST our most blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

The Parents Prayer for their Children.

O Almighty and most merciful Father, who hast promised children as a reward to the righteous, and hast given them to me as a testimony of thy mercy, and an engagement of my duty ; be pleased to be a father unto them, and give them healthful bodies, understanding souls, and sanctified spirits, that they may be thy servants and thy children all their days. Let thy great mercy and providence lead them through the dangers, and temptations, and

ignorances of their youth, that they may never run into folly and the evils of an unbridled appetite; and so order the accidents of their lives, that by good education, careful tutors, holy examples, innocent company, prudent counsel, and thy restraining grace, their duty to thee may be secured in the midst of a crooked and untoward generation: and if it seems good in thy eyes, let me be enabled to provide conveniently for the support of their persons, that they may not be destitute and miserable at my death: or if thou shalt call me off from this world by an early summons, let their portion be thy care, extend thy mercy and providence over their bodies and souls, that they may neither live vicious lives, nor die violent or untimely deaths; but let them glorify thee here with a free obedience, and the duties of a holy life; that when they have served thee in their generations, and have profited the christian commonwealth, they may be co-heirs with JESUS, in the glories of thy eternal kingdom, through the same our Lord JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

Prayers for Persons in Despair.

I Humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon my infirmities; and for the glory of thy name, turn from me all those evils that I most grievously have deserved; and grant that in all my troubles, I may put my whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore serve thee in holiness and pureness of living, to thy honour and glory, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

LORD, I beseech thee, grant me grace, to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with a pure heart and quiet mind, to follow thee, the only true GOD, thro' JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty

ALmighty God, who hast promised to hear the petitions of them that ask in thy Son's name; mercifully incline thine ears unto me, that have made now my prayers and supplications unto thee: and grant that those things which I have faithfully asked according to thy will, may effectually be obtained to the relief of my necessity, and to the setting forth of thy glory, thro' JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer in Time of Sickness.

ALmighty GOD and merciful Father, thou art the author of my being; and as my life, my health and strength are from thee, so they are and ought to be wholly at thy disposal. I humbly confess, that because of my sins it is just with thee to afflict me with sickness and pain, yea, to cut me off from the land of the living. I acknowledge, O Lord, my sins are many and great; the faculties of my soul, and members of my body have been made the instruments of sin: I have not been duly thankful for, nor made a right use of the manifold blessings of health and strength, of time and opportunities of doing and receiving good, which thou hast vouchsafed unto me: I do therefore acknowledge the justice of thy dealings, and that the greatest afflictions I do or can suffer here, are infinitely less than my sins deserve.

But, O thou Father of mercies, who delightest not in the death of a sinner, be favourable unto me, enter not into judgment with thy servant; and though for my sins thou art justly displeased, yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, deliver me not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

I know, O Lord, that afflictions rise not out of

the dust, but are of thy sending; but such is thy mercy, that thou dost not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men; thou designest not the ruin, but the amendment of those whom thou scourgest: I beseech thee, by thy grace, so to sanctify this correction of thine unto me, that this sickness of my body may be a means of health to my soul; make me diligent to search my heart, and to find out the accursed thing, that has brought this affliction upon me, and make me sensible of my manifold provocations, and so to sincerely lament, abhor, and forsake them, that this correction may appear to be the effect of thy love and pity.

Remember, O Lord, the sufferings of thy Son, who himself bore the afflictions, and the punishment due to our sins: I believe in him as my alone Saviour; my trust is in his merits; and I humbly beg for his sake that thou wouldst be reconciled unto me: heal my soul, O Lord, which hath sinned against thee, and then if it be thy blessed will, heal my body also, and restore me again to a state of health and strength, that I may still live to praise thee, and bring forth the fruits of repentance.

But if in thy wisdom thou hast otherwise disposed, if thou hast determined that this sickness shall be unto death, I beseech thee to fit and prepare me for it; give me that sincere and hearty repentance, to which thou hast promised mercy and pardon; wean my heart from the world and all its seducing vanities, and make me long for those more excellent and durable joys, which are at thy right hand for ever. Lord, take away the sting of death, the guilt of my sins, and then though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: I will lay me down in peace, and, Lord, when I awake up, let me be satisfied with thy presence in thy glory. Grant this, O merciful God, for his sake, who is
both

both the Redeemer and Mediator of sinners, even
JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Patience and Relief under Affliction.

O Most gracious God, and merciful Father, I humbly adore thy goodness and mercy, even whilst I suffer by thy justice; for thou dost not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; but designest thy punishments as a means to keep us from greater evils. I heartily acknowledge, O Lord, that all I do or can suffer, is but the due reward of my deeds, and therefore in my greatest afflictions I must still say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.* But, O Lord, I beseech thee in judgment remember mercy, and though my sins have provoked thee to strike, yet consider my weakness, and let not thy stripes be more heavy or more lasting, than thou seest profitable for my soul. Give me, I beseech thee, a great reverence of thy wisdom and justice, an entire confidence in thy goodness and charity, and a thankful remembrance of all thy past mercies to me; and so patiently to endure what thou layest upon me at present, that it may bring forth in me the peaceable fruits of righteousness; that so these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, may work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, through JESUS CHRIST my Saviour. *Amen.*

Prayers for the Holy Communion.

DIRECTIONS.

They that desire to be rightly informed of the nature, design, end and benefits of the sacrament of the LORD'S-SUPPER, will find those particulars set forth and explained in Chapter iii. of the fourth Book, page 332.

In the morning of the day you intend to communicate, when you arise from your bed say,

EJACULATION.

I Will arise, and go to my Father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

When you go from home to church, say,

WHat reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits he hath done unto me!

I will receive the cup of salvation, and call unto the Lord.

I will pay my vows in the presence of all the people: in the courts of the Lord's house: even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord.

Being upon your knees after sermon, say,

The preparatory Prayer.

WHat is man, O Lord! that thou art mindful of him! or the Son of man, that thou soregardest him, as to invite me by thy beloved Son to partake of these holy mysteries, which convey
to

to the worthy communicant, the body and blood of CHRIST my Saviour. I am sensible of, and confess my own unworthiness, to be thus favoured by thy loving kindness : no creature can deserve such blessings : but it is thy infinite goodness, O Lord ! that bestows this, and all mercies and graces by thy free gift. It is therefore, in obedience to thy invitation and command, and not with a presumption of my own merit or righteousness, that I now approach to thy holy table, and come to partake of thy blessings conveyed in the sacrament of CHRIST's body and blood, with a due acknowledgment of thy faithfulness, thro' the same JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

When the Minister goes to the Table, say,

I Will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord ! and so will I go to thine altar ; that I may shew the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works, in the great things thou hast done for my soul. *Amen.*

When you offer your alms, say,

O My soul ! to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices GOD is well pleased.

DIRECTIONS.

Join with the officiating minister ; or attend unto him, reading the SENTENCES, the Prayer for the CHURCH MILITANT, the EXHORTATION, the CONFESSION ; receive the ABSOLUTION with all humility, and follow him in the rest of the communion service, till he comes to the Prayer of CONSECRATION : then, while he receives the BREAD and WINE, lift up your heart to GOD and say,

A Prayer before receiving the BREAD.

I Acknowledge my transgressions, O Lord! and my sin is ever before me: I am not worthy that my Lord should enter under my roof; but do thou only say the word and my soul shall be healed, my iniquity washed away, and my body made a fit tabernacle for thy reception. Lord! I believe, that thou art the bread which came down from heaven, and they that eat thereof worthily, shall obtain eternal life.

DIRECTIONS.

When the minister presents you with the Bread, attend seriously to the form of words with which he delivers it, and when he has prayed to preserve your body and soul to eternal life, say a hearty Amen, but secretly to yourself, and when he concludes that form with these words, faith with thanksgiving, say, Amen.

After receiving the Bread.

O Lord, who feedest me with the bread of life, I offer unto thee all love, obedience and glory. I receive this bread as a sacred memorial of thy exceeding great love and painful sufferings, and as a seal of those gracious terms of mercy thou hast purchased thereby, who didst suffer the punishment due unto me, died for my sins, rose again for my justification, and ever livest to make intercession for me. I receive this consecrated bread in remembrance of these benefits. O let nothing blot out the remembrance of this thy love unto me.

Before receiving the Cup, say,

JESUS my Saviour! thou art the true vine, the faithful are the branches. O grant me understanding

ing in the way of godliness, that I may so drink of the blood of the grape in this cup of blessing, that I may therein partake of thy blood.

DIRECTIONS.

Attend to the words of the minister, when he presents you with the Cup: and when he says, Preserve your body and soul unto everlasting life, say within yourself a hearty Amen. And when he concludes that prayer with these words, and be thankful, say, Amen.

A Prayer after receiving the Cup.

O Lord, who by thy holy apostle hast taught me, that the cup of blessing is the communion of the blood of CHRIST, and the bread broken in this sacrament is the communion of the body of CHRIST; I adore and magnify thy divine goodness, for this conveyance of thy grace into my soul: and beseech thee to give me strength, that I may from henceforth live as becomes one born of the spirit, and enlisted under the banner of my Saviour: thro' whose merits I offer up my imperfect prayers. *Amen.*

EJACULATIONS

To fill up the time till the minister proceeds with the prayers used after the administration of the sacrament, in which you must always join.

1. **WHAT** shall I render unto the Lord, for all the benefits he hath done unto me? what thanks, what praises shall I render unto thee, my gracious God, for permitting me to drink of this fountain of life, the precious blood of thy dear Son?

2. How comfortable, O blessed JESUS, is this cup of salvation to me, which was so bitter and dis-

distasteful unto thee ; this is the blood of the new Testament ; O let it be unto me for the remission of sins. Let it seal unto me the pardon of all my sins past, and enable me to resist and conquer all temptations for the time to come. Let it purify and cleanse my soul, and make it a fit habitation of thyself, and do thou take possession of me, and rule and reign in me for ever.

3. Blessed Saviour, thou hast loved us, and washed us from our sins in thy own blood ; therefore to thee be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

4. Worthy art thou, O Lamb, that wast slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Therefore blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. *Amen.*



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